



# Thinning ozone layer over Europe alarms climate scientists



Tolba: CFCs a threat

SCIENTISTS expressed alarm yesterday over new figures showing that the ozone layer over the Northern Hemisphere is thinner than ever before. Had the winter been longer or colder an ozone hole might have appeared like the one over the Antarctic, exposing northern Europe and North America to increased risks of skin cancer and blindness.

"We're running out of time," said Neil Harris, of the European Ozone Secretariat in Cambridge, announcing the figures of ozone loss gathered by the 17-nation European Arctic Stratospheric Ozone Experiment. Joe Farman, the British scientist who first identified the ozone hole over Antarctica, said: "It confirms that we are taking risks with the environment." He urged governments to speed up the phasing-out of ozone-

destroying chemicals such as the chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) used in refrigerators.

Mostafa Tolba, executive director of the UN Environment Programme (UneP), formally proposed that the ban on CFCs agreed under the Montreal Protocol should be advanced by four years to the beginning of 1996. Britain, the US and the EC have already agreed to the earlier deadline. Dr Harris said people should avoid the midday sun, but that he was more alarmed by the implications for the world's climate and for plant and marine life, neither of which can cope well with increased ultra-violet radiation.

The experiment data, expected to be confirmed by satellite information gathered by the US space agency Nasa, show that the ozone layer was on average about 15 per

cent thinner over the winter months than expected. Many monitoring stations reported their lowest-ever measurements, including a 10 per cent drop in Hohenpeissenberg, Germany, in December, and an 18 per cent drop in Uccle, Belgium, in January, compared with long-term averages.

Dr Rod Jones of Cambridge university's chemistry department, one of the scientists responsible, said: "The really worrying thing is that these figures show that we had the potential to have an ozone hole. In fact, one did not occur, but these warning signals mean that in another year we

could face a very serious situation." An ozone hole would increase the amount of ultra-violet light reaching the surface of the Earth, with damaging effects on crops and an increase in skin cancer and cataracts.

Three factors have been identified as contributing to the low ozone readings. High levels of chlorine compounds, derived from CFCs, were observed in January and February. In addition, the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines had multiplied the amount of aerosol particles tenfold, mopping up the nitrogen oxides that would otherwise have inhibited the destruction of ozone

by the chlorine compounds. Finally, there were anomalous wind and weather patterns which, even on their own, might have led to ozone loss. Together, the three factors produced record low values at many sites.

During January, ozone was falling at a rate of 1 per cent a day.

Low temperatures are necessary for ozone destruction, so in a longer or colder winter the levels might have been lower still.

The worst months are now past, but fresh observations are to be

other years of lower temperatures later in the winter, this potential for ozone destruction could be realised in the future.

UneP has estimated that a sustained loss of 10 per cent of the ozone would lead to between 1.6 and 1.75 million extra cataracts worldwide every year, and a 26 per cent increase in skin cancer. Speeding up the ban on CFCs would, they said, prevent 4.5 million additional cases of skin cancer and 350,000 cases of blindness.

Fiona Weir of Friends of the Earth said leading governments must take far more effective action to prevent further releases of damaging chemicals. "If the world's richest countries do not show leadership on this issue, the ozone crisis will turn into a disaster. The cost of complacency is already far too high."

Engineers begin enquiry into cave-in after rescuers dig tunnel through five metres of fallen rock

## Trapped miners led to safety after 15 hours underground

By PAUL WILKINSON

EIGHT mineworkers trapped underground for 15 hours were led to safety yesterday. Engineers later moved into the pit, at Stillingfleet, North Yorkshire, to begin a search for the cause of the cave-in that trapped them.

A team from the mine's inspectorate of the government's Health and Safety Executive, with representatives from British Coal and the miners' unions moved into the underground roadway where the fall occurred, a mile from the pithead bottom. Their report is expected in about a month.

The rescue from one of Britain's most modern pits shortly after 8.00am yesterday had relied on the old mining techniques of pick, shovel and sweat. At one stage, rescue workers stripped to the waist in rising temperatures, struggling in a gap less than 3ft high and 18 inches wide.

British Coal had expected to release the men soon after a 50-metre section of the roof fell in at 4.45pm on Monday. But efforts to reach them were stalled for almost eight hours during the night by a huge boulder and twisted steel pit props blocking the last two metres.

The rescuers could not use

cutting gear for fear of fire. Instead they used their hands and picks and shovels, filling buckets with soil which were passed out along a human chain. They had to endure dust-laden air and poor ventilation caused by the awkward conditions.

For the last six hours, they were working one man at a time for ten-minute intervals in the tiny cavity. One British Coal official described it as "a very gritty Turkish bath".

Rescue seemed near in the early hours of the morning when the trapped men managed to pull the boulder clear but, as they did so, more debris from the roof poured into the gap, blocking their escape. Eventually, just after 8.00am, the hole was big enough again for them to crawl clear.

At first, they tried to burrow beneath it and then over the top. For several hours, the escape tunnel made no forward progress and the trapped miners were ordered to switch off all but one of their helmet lights to conserve power.

Eventually, the path was cleared and the eight were given medical checks at the scene by a doctor and nurse who had gone down with the rescue teams.

On the surface, they had showers and downed several cans of lager to wash away the dirt inside before going straight home to their families and bed.

The men, who were uninjured, used radios to summon help and hacked open a com-

pressed air line, used to power cutting equipment, to provide some ventilation.

Within an hour, the rescuers had poked a hole through to them, but difficulties with huge pieces of debris made it difficult to enlarge. The men sang to keep up their spirits and helped to speed up their release by attacking the rock from their side.

By mid-evening the rescuers had enlarged the gap so that they could shake hands with the trapped men and pass through their first food for several hours: beef and turkey sandwiches and cartons of orange juice.

It was at that point that hopes rose for an early release, but then the rescuers encountered the giant boulder blocking their path.

The men — six miners, an engineer and a deputy or supervisor — had been opening up a new coal face when the 12ft-high roof gave way without warning. The men were about 500m away, working at the blind end of the tunnel.

Although debris littered a large area of the roadway, only about five metres were completely blocked.

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All-night effort: union leader Ken Capstick, right, leaving the pit with one of the rescuers yesterday

## Human costs cast shadow on future

THE rescue of the eight trapped miners in the Selby coalfield highlights the advances in pit safety and underground rescue techniques over the past decade.

It also shows that the cost of coal can be tragically high. Many within the industry were also saying yesterday that it is a cost which makes the industry unattractive for privatisation.

The rescue operation involved men from the area Mines Rescue Service, all coal-face workers who have undergone intensive training in first aid and the use of breathing apparatus and cutting and lifting equipment.

British Coal is proud of the progress it has made in pit safety over the past few years and says that coal mining is now less hazardous than at any time. Before nationalisation an average of 2,000 lives a year were lost in coal-mining. In 1947, the first year of nationalised coal, 618 men were killed in pit accidents.

Last year there were 12 coalfield deaths but according to Health and Safety Executive figures, in terms of serious and fatal injuries per 1,000 workers, mining is still Britain's most hazardous occupation. There are more deaths and injuries in the

construction industry, but in proportion to numbers involved coal mining still has more deaths and serious injuries than any other industry.

The annual rate per 1,000 workers in all industries is 0.9. In mining it is 8.4. Construction has 2.89 fatal and major injuries per 1,000 workers; agriculture 1.6; energy 2.4; forestry 2.8; and the chemical industry 1.57.

The executive's figures also show that the proportion of death and major injuries per 1,000 workers, mining is still Britain's most hazardous occupation. There are more deaths and injuries in the

miners' strike of 1984-85 show that the proportion rose from 7.7 in 1986-87 to 8.4 in 1990-91. In 1989-1990 there were 19 deaths in the industry, including those in licensed private pits. Last year there were 12.

That reduction in the death rate, British Coal insists, is a true reflection of the fact that the industry is becoming safer. The company says the number of people involved in serious accidents has dropped from a high of 982 in 1986-87 to 510 last year.

The unions oppose changes being made in working hours agreements, which they say are to prepare the industry for privatisation but which are affecting safety.

## Activists admit Becher's attack

Animal rights activists claimed responsibility yesterday for an arson attack that destroyed Becher's Brook, the most famous fence on the Grand National course.

The fire occurred on Sunday night as security at Aintree wound down after the race on Saturday. Robin Webb, of the Animal Liberation Front, said the claim was made by a woman who telephoned his home. "I would imagine Becher's Brook was chosen as the most infamous of the jumps which has caused the suffering of many horses," he said.

## Player cleared

A rugby player was yesterday cleared of fracturing an opponent's skull during a match. The case at Leeds Crown Court against Kevin Carr, the Upper Wharfedale lock forward, was halted after two team-mates said another player had hit Keith Astbury.

Recorder Benjamin Nolan ordered a police inquiry after allegations of a cover-up into how Mr Astbury was injured.

## Back on the air

Radio Caroline, the former pirate station, was legally back on air yesterday after winning a four-week community radio licence. The station on the Ross Revenge, berthed in Dover harbour, Kent, burst into life at midnight. Its output can be heard in Dover and surrounding areas. The pirate station operated for 27 years before being silenced in April last year by the 1990 Broadcasting Act.

## £10,000 reward

The Post Office is offering a £10,000 reward for information leading to the conviction of two armed raiders who fired a shotgun at a screen during a raid on a post office in Shoreditch High Street, east London, yesterday hitting a woman employee with glass and pellets. The two men took an undisclosed sum of money. The woman, thought to be in her twenties, was taken to hospital.

## BR denies plan for closures

By MICHAEL DYNES  
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH Rail yesterday dismissed claims by rail union officials that large sections of the network would have to be shut if the industry were privatised under a new Conservative government.

Loss-making lines in England and Wales would be closed and more than a dozen InterCity services demoted to regional status, union officials said. The cuts would mean the closure of about 255 stations and the loss of 30,000 jobs, they added.

The threatened lines were said to include those between Exeter and Barnstaple and between Newquay and Penzance in the South-West, Lowestoft and Ipswich and Norwich and Sheringham in East Anglia, and between Shrewsbury and Dovey junction and between Abergavenny and Pwllheli, in North Wales. The InterCity lines named included those between London and Norwich, Colchester and Ipswich, and Leeds and Bradford, officials said.

Jimmy Knapp, the rail union chief, said that the "spectre of Beeching" had returned. Rail officials insisted that the documents purporting to show a BR privatisation list were full of errors and had no official status.

## ITV licensees fail to agree new scheduling system

ITV's ratings lead over BBC1 could be jeopardised by programming delays, writes Melinda Wittstock

and, directors of programming at a number of ITV companies, including LWT's Marcus Plantin, Yorkshire's John Fairley and Central's Andy Allan.

From May, the Office of Fair Trading will have six months to ensure the new arrangements are fair and competitive.

Programme-makers yesterday said they feared the delay could be detrimental to the network, as it would again postpone commissioning for ITV's autumn 1993 schedules. That could jeopardise ITV's ratings lead over BBC1. However, the new licensees already have interim arrangements in place for the first nine months of next year.

Disagreements persist as to how much the big nine independent television companies should subsidise the smallest six. It has not yet been decided how much of a discount the smaller companies should get on networked programmes.

It is understood there is still some haggling over how much each of the larger companies should contribute to the overall network budget. At the time of last October's widely criticised blind-bid auction, it was feared that the wide gap between cash bids — from Central's £2,000 to Yorkshire's £37.7 million — would inhibit agreement.

## Detector sniffs out Semtex

By NICK NUTTALL  
TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

A CHEAP, portable bomb detector that can detect a range of explosives, including Semtex, one of the most difficult to identify, has been developed by a British firm.

At the heart of the Viper device, which weighs less than 40lbs, is a unit that sweeps high volumes of air through to a filter where explosive chemicals are trapped. The design means that 60 times more air is swept through conventional detectors.

Richard Wheeldon, of the Cambridge company Ai, which developed the device, said: "The filter is fitted to another part of the unit where trapped chemicals are analysed giving a read-out in seconds. The high volume of air swept through means that even the low pressure chemicals given off by a 300 to 500 grammes Semtex bomb can be detected if the explosive is in non-hermetically sealed bags."

Mr Wheeldon said that Viper, which will be launched in Britain and America next month, will cost about £15,000. Bigger conventional devices cost between £100,000 and several million pounds.

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## Hotel puts price on ultimate break

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, TRAVEL CORRESPONDENT

WHATEVER happens tomorrow, the Gleneagles hotel fully expects to clean up as the seriously rich either drown their sorrows or celebrate in style with Britain's most expensive package holiday.

The luxurious Scottish hotel yesterday launched its "Heaven Can Wait" five-day package costing £4,625 a head and will have staff waiting by the telephone for the expected flood of post-election bookings.

Neil Woodcock, the hotel's marketing director, said: "Despite the recession, there are still people who can afford to pay for a really individual travel experience will come."

The "Heaven Can Wait" package is being reserved for the rest of the year for the "heaven can wait" holidaymakers, many of whom are expected to come from Britain.

For those not quite as ready to splash out the best part of £10,000 for two, however, the travel trade has dozens of offers open which they expect to sell quickly after the election.

Rosemary Astles, marketing director of Thomson Holidays, said pre-election sales were down at least 30 per cent down but once the uncertainty was ended "we fully expect to see sales up by as much as 50 per cent, provided there is no hung parliament, which will only add to the uncertainty".

Jack Jesson  
Former sailor  
in Zan  
died on May 1

## Pit bull terriers rip off man's ear after escape from garage

BY STEWART TENDER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

**TWO** pit bull terriers broke loose from a garage and ripped off an ear from a man who was passing by.

The dogs turned on police who arrived outside the garage in South Ealing, west London, early yesterday morning to find one animal with George Daszczuk's head in its mouth while the other was attacking his feet. Officers used truncheons to try to get the dogs off their victim. The animals were shot by an officer from an armed response vehicle who was called to the scene.

The garage owner was later released on police bail last night after being questioned. The two guard dogs are believed to have been kept in the

cab of a truck and tore their way through an inch-thick wooden garage door. The garage is set back from the road among terraced houses.

The dogs attacked Mr Daszczuk, aged 40, who was visiting his girl friend's flat, when he went to see what was causing the noise. Mr Daszczuk, a communications consultant from Kensington, west London, was taken to Mount Vernon hospital near Rickmansworth for emergency treatment. His severed right ear was found at the scene by police and taken to the hospital. In four hours of micro surgery, surgeons sewed back the ear. It will be five days before they know if it has been saved.

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## Register holds 6,500 animals

**THE** Dangerous Dogs Act, brought in last year in response to public concern at the risks from pit bull terriers and other fighting dogs, has resulted in 6,500 animals being registered. These dogs have met requirements including neutering, marking with a microchip and identifying tattoo, and having third party insurance cover.

The number of pit bulls is unknown but when the act was introduced, 8,200 dogs were notified to index keepers. The Home Office believes 1,000 dogs have been put down or exported. As work on the index is completed, local police will be told of 700 dogs outstanding and begin checks on owners.

The act creates a number of criminal offences surrounding the animals, which must be muzzled in public and be

in the control of someone over 16. Owners must also ensure dogs do not stay and police may seize animals and seek a court order to destroy them.

Ownership of an unregistered animal can bring a maximum penalty of £2,000 and/or six months in jail. If a dog is dangerously out of control in public similar penalties are available to the courts.

Theresa Brown, aged 21, whose house overlooks the garage, said police beat at the dogs with truncheons but they would not let go of their victim. "They had to drive the car right up to the dog with their lights and sirens on." She said the dogs were shot from about 15 yards away.

Superintendent Keith Trowbridge said that a police marksman fired six shots from an automatic rifle into the animals.

Mr Trowbridge said of the pit bull terriers: "If they are guard dogs they must either have a handler or be tethered. We believe these dogs are registered."

A three-man team led by consultant plastic surgeon David Gaul performed the operation on Mr Daszczuk. Stephen Leivers, the director of operational services, said that Mr Daszczuk also had lacerations to his left ear and the left side of his face, wounds on both arms, his chest, left and right calves and the right leg. He was also suffering from acute shock. "His wounds are horrific and numerous micro sutures were needed to fix them, but he is not in any danger now."

He said Mr Daszczuk would probably be released in a week's time. Asked if he would be scared for life, Mr Leivers replied: "I leave you to draw your own conclusions."

The victim: Mr Daszczuk in hospital yesterday

## Minerals extractors look north

BY NICK NUTTALL  
TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

**ENVIRONMENTALISTS** said yesterday that increasing numbers of sites in Scotland could be turned over to minerals extraction as quarrying companies seek less sensitive locations north of the border.

The warning, issued on the day that a public enquiry opened in Frome, Somerset, into plans to extend Whealystone quarry in the east Mendip Hills, follows a series of recent proposals and planning applications for sites, mainly in western Scotland, for vast "super" quarries.

Groups such as the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) and Friends of the Earth Scotland, believe these Scottish proposals signal an attempt by companies which extract gravel, rock, limestone and other construction minerals to transfer operations to remote areas as opposition grows to their operations south of the border. Local and national campaigns have been launched against planning applications after recent forecasts indicating a 60 per cent rise in minerals demand between now and 2011.

"It is going to become harder and harder for the companies to get planning permission in England and Wales and they appear to be setting their sights on more remote locales in Scotland," said Ben Plowden, CPRE's minerals campaigner.

Science, L & T section, page 6

## Asthma enquiry to study role of drugs Hospital cases treble in ten years

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

**A BIG** enquiry into the high rate of asthma deaths is to consider whether modern drug treatments are making the disease worse and increasing risks for sufferers.

The enquiry, launched yesterday by the National Asthma Campaign's UK task force, will try to explain why the disease appears to be getting worse when effective drug treatments are more widely available and used.

Hospital admissions for asthma have trebled in the past ten years and risen five-fold among young children. The annual death rate from the disease rose to a peak of 2,000 in 1988 since when it has fallen only slightly. Failure to reduce the rate was serious, if not scandalous,

Donald Lane, chairman of the task force, said. Treatments for asthma, which affects two to three million people, have doubled in the past ten years. The enquiry will consider if the disease is increasing or becoming more severe, whether drugs to treat it may be causing more problems, whether some people are not getting the treatment they need.

Evidence from abroad suggests there has been a worldwide increase in atopic disease (hypersensitivity) including hay fever and eczema as well as asthma, according to Peter Burney, reader in public health at St Thomas's hospital, London. Asthma is worse in the north, west and southwest of Britain. In developing countries it is common in the towns but almost unknown in rural areas. The reasons are unclear but Dr Burney said that pollution was unlikely to be a factor.

"Pollution has got better since the 1950s, not worse," he said. There is still doubt as to how much of the increase is due to doctors being more likely to diagnose wheezy patients as asthmatic.

Researchers will examine all deaths from asthma in East Anglia, the West Midlands, Wales, Scotland and Wales. Details will be collected from doctors and relatives on the circumstances of the death, the treatment received and the severity of the illness.

The enquiry will also examine the safety of the asthma drugs

and consider deficiencies in treatment.

• Heart disease causes 12 million premature deaths every year and is spreading from the rich countries to the poorer ones, the World Health Organisation said yesterday in a report marking World Heart Day.

Six million deaths, half the world total, now occur in developing countries, and in the next decade heart disease will overtake infectious diseases as a cause of death in these countries, WHO said.

The total amounted to a world-class coronary catastrophe, the Geneva-based agency said. The report said that half of deaths from coronaries and strokes could be prevented by more healthy living.

## Blot on the landscape goes from Bard to best

**THE** English car park, a leading blot on the landscape in which motorists are mugged and vehicles ravaged against the sides of narrow ramps and concrete pillars, took an uncertain step towards responsibility yesterday.

The Duke of Gloucester presented the first English Tourist Board car park awards in London, a venture which means that the best of them will be able to display plaques normally reserved for historic buildings. Calling for better car parks, he said: "We expect good management in other forms of life. There's nothing more infuriating than finding car parks which don't have it."

The awards, sponsored by Rover Cars, were launched in response to recommendations from a task force established by Michael How-

ard, the employment secretary, to examine the impact of tourism on the environment. They are aimed at rewarding and encouraging an imaginative and useful approach to the design, construction and upgrading of car parks.

Bridgefoot multi-storey car park in Stratford-upon-Avon won the urban award, while the village car park at Downham in the Ribble Valley, Lancashire, took the rural prize.

In Shakespeare country, the newly immortalised parking lot, designed by Keith Pavey of the Building Design Partnership and owned by the district council, is not expected to compete with Anne Hathaway's cottage as a honeypot for sightseers. But the judges decided that the architecture and landscaping are outstandingly at-

tractive, while there is a "sense of well-being" internally from the design and high standard of customer care.

With white globe lights on turquoise sticks and hundreds of shrubs spilling from stone balustrades, the car park which is only yards from the poet's statue in front of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, is certainly unusual. Before the construction of the £2.5 million 642-space development in Stratford there were fears that it would ruin the town but most locals who are passionate about

Shakespeare's birthplace has one of the best car parks in England, writes Michael Horsnell

maintaining Stratford's special character are learning to live with it. Not so Linda Smith, cook at the Pen and Parchment public house which is reputed to pre-date Shakespeare. "It's an eyesore. I can't understand why it has won an award," she said. "I wouldn't park in it on principle! It's unnecessary. Pedestrianisation for tourists has taken up a lot of spaces." Hilary Justice, a shop manager, said: "This is Stratford. People come here from all over the world. It's all right but it ought to be a bit more oldie worldie. But of course it's good for business."

Christopher Hood, a GP from Oxford, and his family said they loved it. They brought a party of Belgian friends with them who all spontaneously said "Wow, this car

## Employers fear schools neglect literacy skills

BY JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

**EMPLOYERS** believe that standards of literacy and numeracy, the basic educational skills they most value, are slipping because schools are devoting too much attention to computing and word processing.

Almost two-thirds of the 227 companies surveyed last month by academics at Kingston Polytechnic reported that these skills had declined over the past five years. Communication skills had also worsened among school leavers recruited by the firms.

Although the same proportion had noted an improvement in computing skills, most employers provided their own training tailored to particular systems. Increased competence in typing and word processing also left employers largely unimpressed.

Many firms were so concerned about their young employees' literacy and numeracy that they were offering remedial classes. However, Nick Turner and Steve Smith, who did the research for the Alfred Marks employment agency, calculated that communication and team skills were in most demand. Their report, *Britain's Education*, says: "The traditional call for a straightforward refocusing of teachers' efforts on the basics does not appear to be what business is asking for." Only literacy came out ahead of communication skills in the employers' scale of priorities.

Dr Smith said yesterday: "The evidence suggests that business is extremely disatisfied with a whole series of skills, although people always look at the past through rose-tinted spectacles. Schools seem to have responded to a demand for better skills in information technology only to find that employers' priorities have shifted."

More than half the firms said that school leavers were badly prepared for work, failing to adapt to an office regime and considering their outside activities more important.

WPC Joy Court, aged 36, tried for five years to win a transfer to the CID, where her husband works, but was rejected. She became a detective last year but continued an action for sex discrimination.

The Police Federation, which took up her case, said yesterday that she had been awarded a substantial four-figure sum in a settlement with the force negotiated by Acas, the arbitration service.

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## Developer had listed chapel blown up

BY RICHARD DUCE

**A PROPERTY** developer hired a quarryman for £7,000 to damage a 19th century listed chapel with explosives after he was refused planning consent to replace the building with flats, a court was told yesterday.

Peter Denega, aged 42, of Torquay, Devon, had intended to widen cracks in the facade of the Methodist chapel at Dartmouth, Devon, but the stringent charge was so strong that it led to a security alert.

Mr Denega, of Ilfracombe, Devon, planned that the explosion, in February last year, would enlarge existing cracks and lead to consent for the chapel's demolition, Plymouth crown court was told.

Andrew Chubb, for the prosecution, said: "The effect of the explosion far exceeded what they intended and the facade was destroyed."

The court was told that Mr Denega had bought the chapel from South Hams council in 1988 and soon after was refused listed building consent to demolish it and develop 21 sheltered housing units.

He won an appeal to the environment department, on condition that the original facade, with its four Ionic columns, was retained.

Mr Denega admitted executing the demolition and Denega admitted causing work to be done that would result in changing or demolishing a listed building. They will be sentenced today.

## Tamil ends fast

**A** Tamil prisoner was recovering in hospital yesterday after ending a 55-day hunger strike in protest at his murder conviction.

Sam Kulasingham, 35, abandoned his strike after Kenneth Baker agreed at the weekend to a full investigation of his case. Mr Kulasingham was convicted four years ago after a fire-bomb attack on a house in east London in which three other men died.

Police and local environmental health officers are investigating the incident, which happened on Saturday night.

## Body in house

**A** couple viewing a house in Chatham, Kent, which they were about to buy, found the body of a young man hanging from the rafters in the loft. The dead man was named as James Lennox, aged 22. Police said there were no suspicious circumstances surrounding his death. A spokesman for Harrison's, the estate agents, said that the couple had pulled out of the house purchase.

## Boy spotted

**Kerry** Needham of Sheffield was told yesterday that her son Ben, feared dead on a Greek island, is alive. The fair-haired two-year-old, missing for six months, was seen with two women by Greek police on the island of Kefalonia, not far from the holiday island of Kos where Ben disappeared while playing. Police are now treating the disappearance as a kidnap inquiry.



Battle ends: Joy Court, whose campaign changed police selection policy

## Police pay for barring woman from CID job

BY CRAIG SETON

**A WOMAN** police officer has won substantial compensation for sex discrimination from Derbyshire police and an apology from her chief constable after proving that her attempts to become a detective were blocked by a quota system operated within the force's criminal investigation department.

"People within the force have to appreciate that equal opportunities policies mean just that. In the future, people will be selected for posts on merit, regardless of gender or race."

Geoffrey Towle, secretary of the Derbyshire branch of the Police Federation, said yesterday that an unofficial quota system had operated within the CID to restrict the number of women detectives. No more than two women were allowed to work on any sub division. "This was an unwritten system. There was nothing in the force's policy to allow it to happen. It was openly talked about in CID but the problem was, nobody was prepared to address it. Women were not being judged equally with men."

Mr Towle said senior officers within the CID "were content to operate this sys-

tem and it was allowed to continue". The police service was male-dominated and there were difficulties for women.

WPC Joy Court, an officer for 17 years, is now a detective in the Full Street station in Derby. She and her husband have no children.

Last year, the number of officers in the Derbyshire force was about 1,770, of which 177 were women. There are 212 male detectives and 33 women. The Metropolitan police said yesterday that it had an equal opportunities policy. Of its 28,000 officers, 3,134 were women and its CID had 3,817 male and 277 female officers.

A recent police conference on equal opportunities heard other evidence of discrimination against women in the police. A female officer wanting to join a motor-cycle course was told she first had to prove she could lift a heavily loaded 1,000cc machine left lying on its side, although no male officers had to pass the test.

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# Court blocks £14m sale of sports field given to town

BY FRANCES GIBB AND RONALD FAUX

SOME 21,000 residents won High Court backing yesterday in their fight to stop a council's multi-million-pound plan to sell for commercial development a 22-acre playing field given by a local benefactor.

The council's proposals were blocked by the High Court in the first of two test cases expected to have an important impact on the protection of open spaces held by local authorities on charitable trust for the public benefit.

Residents were celebrating last night after Mr Justice Chadwick ruled that the court had no power to authorise Oldham borough council, Greater Manchester, to sell Clayton playing fields. The plan to sell the fields was opposed by 21,000 people, 4,000 of whom formed the Clayton Action Group to fight the proposals with the Open Spaces Society.

On Monday, local residents had celebrated with fireworks, banners and a cavalcade of cars the 30th anniversary of the gift of the 24 acres of green space.

The council is considering an appeal. It regards its scheme to sell the site to a developer for £14 million as "a unique opportunity" to upgrade recreational facilities in the area by using money raised to provide and maintain new playing fields elsewhere. A Marks & Spencer and a Safeway store and 1,800 parking spaces were planned for the site.

The Attorney-General, Sir Patrick Mayhew, QC, who was represented by counsel in the case in his role as protector of charities, was awarded costs against Oldham council, which cannot sell without court sanction.

Wendy Lutley, assistant general secretary of the Open Spaces Society, said later that

there could be many parks and recreation grounds given to councils by benefactors or acquired by public subscription where the wording in the deeds implied that there was a charitable trust. The society would be asking local authorities to check deeds, take legal advice and, if appropriate, register these pieces of land with the Charity Commission to give them some long-term protection.

Jim Young, chairman of the action group, said the playing fields were once a large hole in the ground bought by the late Ima Clayton, a local haulier, as a dump for millions of tons of fly ash he had contracted to remove from power stations.

By the early 1960s, Mr Clayton was a millionaire and the hole had been filled, turfed over and given to the citizens of Royton, Chadderton and Colne, all districts of Oldham. The council put six football pitches on the land and the remainder became a popular open space. "It is a lovely spot on a high elevation with views over a country park in one direction, out to the Pennines in another and over the old mills of Oldham and south to Manchester."

David Shipp, director of legal services for Oldham, whose court costs are being met by the developers, Inter-city, said: "It is not over yet and I think serious thought will be given to an appeal."

The judge's ruling against Oldham on the main issue in the dispute — whether the court had power to sanction a sale of the land held on charitable trust by the council — meant that Oldham's case fell at the first fence. Unless the council wins on appeal, the judge will not have to consider other arguments over the merits of the sale.



Treasure trove: Brigitte Huybrechts of Christie's with some of the porcelain

## Pope refuses compromise on celibate priests

BY RUTH GLEDHILL  
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE Pope yesterday affirmed celibacy for the priesthood, despite pressure from Catholics in Third World countries to meet a shortage of priests by allowing married ordinaries, and a belief that celibacy is contributing to a crisis in vocations in the West.

John Paul says in an apostolic exhortation: "For an adequate priestly spiritual life, celibacy ought not to be

considered and lived as an isolated or purely negative element, but as one aspect of a positive, specific and characteristic approach to being a priest." He describes celibacy as "a singular source of spiritual fertility in the world" and adds: "It is especially important that the priest understand the theological motivation of the church's law on celibacy."

The shortage in the Third World has left some priests ministering to many thousands of people over wide

areas, with some communities going without a weekly mass. In Britain, the number of men wishing to become priests is in slow decline. Nearly 90 began training for the secular priesthood in England and Wales in 1990, compared with 104 in 1989, 107 in 1988 and 144 in 1982.

The Pope writes of "rejoicing at the growth and increase of priestly vocations now taking place in some parts of the world." He says that some priests are exhausted by their increasing

## Buyers dive for sunken treasure

FROM SARAH JANE CHECKLAND  
SALEROOM CORRESPONDENT, IN AMSTERDAM

THOUSANDS of porcelain items raised from the sea-bed off Vietnam were sold for up to seven times their estimated price at Christie's in Amsterdam yesterday. By the time the sale of 28,000 lots from the Vung Tau cargo ends today, it is expected to have raised about £5 million.

The morning session raised £870,575, about the sum expected for the whole day. A pair of rare beakers from the 17th century Chinese cargo sold for £4,850 guillers (£14,059), having been estimated at £6,000 guillers. Four blue and white tasse, or bowls on tall stems, fetched 32,200 guillers (£10,094). Among the most active bidders were British-based dealers and one from Taiwan.

Archaeologists believe

that the wreck was a East Asian trading vessel bound for Batavia — now Jakarta, Indonesia — one of the centres for the Dutch trading empire.

It probably sank because of a fire caused by one of the 14 cooking pots

found on deck.

Before the auction, some

dealers were fearful that

Christie's was flooding the market with blue and white

porcelain. Items from the

Nanking cargo sale in

1986, that had been offered

back on the market recently,

had not fared well, they

said.

The Vietnamese govern-

ment delegation to the sale

would not comment on any

plans to salvage further

wrecks believed to be be-

neath the South China Sea.

Le Minh Cong, general di-

rector of the transport min-

istry, acknowledged the

existence of further wrecks,

but said: "Right now we

couldn't say anything about

the future. Each case we will

submit to the government."

The cargo, named after

the town closest to where it

was found, was discovered

three years ago by a fisher-

man who caught it in his

nets. The Vietnamese

Salvage Corporation, a state-

owned monopoly, established a partnership

with the Swedish diving com-

pany Sverker Hall-

strom to salvage the cargo.

The two companies will

share the proceeds of the

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sale.

Kiss saw  
baby from  
bath dead

A baby was born 15 months after being born alive following a back-bending operation. Stephen John Martin, 25, and his mother Helen aged 35, were at the Victoria Hospital, Liverpool, when the baby was born. The baby was born with a prolapsed rectum, which was repaired during the operation. After the operation, the baby was born alive, but died shortly afterwards. The baby was born with a prolapsed rectum, which was repaired during the operation. After the operation, the baby was born alive, but died shortly afterwards.

## Robber jail

Two men, one of whom was armed with a knife, burst into a police station in the town of Alton, Hampshire, and took a police officer and a woman who was in the station. The men then fled with the officer and the woman.

## Howard to

The new government is to sell off its stake in an airline, further to the sale of British Cables. The general manager has decided the other week to go ahead with the sale.

## Mast plan

The new government is to sell off its stake in an airline, further to the sale of British Cables. The general manager has decided the other week to go ahead with the sale.

## Firm closes

A firm that makes software for the computer industry has closed down. The firm, which was based in the town of Bury, Lancashire, has closed down.

## Royal visit

The Queen is to visit the town of Bury, Lancashire, on Friday 10 April.

Will you be  
communicating  
easily?



**Funny, when the election  
came around,  
so did my operation.**

Strange, isn't it? Thirteen years of NHS underfunding. And now, all of a sudden, a frantic, money-no-object scramble to shorten the waiting list.

Of course, the more people who get their

operations, the better. But does this really mean the end of NHS underfunding?

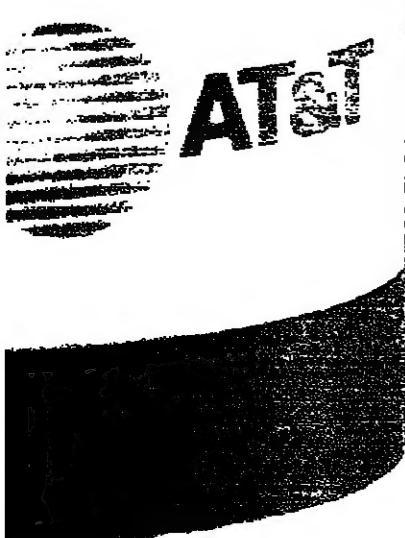
Can it be that the people responsible for the loss of a quarter of all NHS beds have really had a change of heart?

It would be nice to think so. But what date have Health Service Managers been given to achieve this reduction in waiting list numbers?

April 1st. Just 8 days before the election. Now there's a coincidence.

You can choose a better future. Make sure you do.

**NALGO**



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WEDNESDAY APRIL 8 1992

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THE TIMES

7

## On other pages

Woodrow Wyatt ..... 16  
 Leading article ..... 17  
 Westminster property, L&T ..... 7

## ELECTION 92

## Wembley rally

## Major sets out 'ten Tory truths' for a golden future

BY NICHOLAS WOOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN Major put himself at the centre of his appeal to the people last night, promising them a "golden future" if they placed their trust in him tomorrow.

His emotionally patriotic appeal for a personal mandate was coupled with a robust restatement of his party's philosophy — ten Tory truths — and a scornful attack on Neil Kinnock's "unprincipled thirst for power".

He said: "I have lived life in many stations. I believe I understand what makes the heart of Britain beat. What inspires all those millions of families across this land who go out each day to work and strive and create for the future. They are the people who are carrying the long, glorious story of Britain forward across the years.

This country needs a gov-

ernment that will nourish and sustain their ambitions, widen their choices, throw open the great gates of opportunity, and help the whole nation march through.

"I have only just begun the task I have set myself. On Thursday, I ask this nation to look at my record of service and my ideals for the future, to place their trust in me, and in this party that has served them so well and faithfully. I set no bounds to my ambitions for this country or its people."

"I know that we have in our grasp a truly glorious future."

At a rally in Wembley, north London, he said there were ten great reasons why his party would triumph.

Strong defence, a commitment to the free market, taxation to create wealth, controlling inflation, implacable hostility to the "tyranny" of trade union power, nourishing the health and education services, spreading private ownership, privatising once loss-making state industries, and strong government were the hallmarks of Conservative government.

"I want a Britain where there is a helping hand for those who need it. Where people can get a hand up, not just a hand out. A country that is fair and free from prejudice, a classless society at ease with itself."

Mr Major scorned the socialist alternative, saying "Socialism is not a road, it's a dead end".

He added: "Britain is ready now to move forward when others are sliding backwards. All around us the signs are there. In house building, in exports, in retail sales. All that Britain is waiting for to achieve recovery is the confidence of a Conservative government will bring."

The Labour leader had jettisoned his principles and could not be trusted. "Look at PR. He was always against PR. In the latest, most cynical change of all, he dashes towards it, grasping desperately at a prospect of power. Power before principles. Does he think the public cannot see what he's up to?"

"Let Dr Major diagnose

Leading article, page 17

## CAMPAIGN SKETCH

"If public opinion was the arbiter, we would not have rearmed against Hitler"

— Michael Heseltine on opinion polls showing most Scots wanting devolution or independence

"A massacre of the innocents by the ignorant"

— John Major's vision of a Britain under Labour

"If you had asked a plumber not once, not twice, but three times to fix a leak, and you were standing in the kitchen up to your waist in water, would you call the same plumber to fix it again?"

— Neil Kinnock on the Tories' three terms of office

"The people know that a vote for the Tories on Thursday is a vote for breaking up the NHS. A vote for Labour is a vote for building up the service"

— Neil Kinnock

"We would be seized of our responsibility to provide the Queen with a government"

— Des Wilson, Lib Dem campaign director

## Defence of electoral reform

## Ashdown attacks 'bully tactics'

BY SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

PADDY Ashdown accused the Conservatives last night of embarking on a desperate and dangerous game by attacking voting reform. He warned voters that the Tories were trying to bully them out of support for the Liberal Democrats.

"However desperate their attacks, however weak they feel, the Conservative party will not be allowed to drag our country down with their party as they now contemplate defeat on Thursday," he told a rally in St Austell, Cornwall.

He singled out for censure Kenneth Baker who had dismissed PR as "a pact with the devil". "On this issue we Liberal Democrats will not be

stalled by the panic reaction of a failed home secretary who knows he is about to lose his job," he said.

He was prepared to debate the issue on voting reform at any time and anywhere with Mr Baker. But the Liberal Democrats would not accept "this ridiculous slur, this slander" on the decent people who wanted to modernise democracy.

Mr Ashdown said that John Major was insulting voters by telling them not to sleepwalk into the polling station. "More and more the Tories are now playing a dangerous game. They have a very simple attitude. If you don't vote Conservative, they treat you either as a fool or as a knave."

For 13 years, the Conservative party had been telling everybody what to do and it was time it listened instead.

"That way, Mr Major and his colleagues would find out where they have been going wrong. But no, their only reaction is to try and frighten you into the ballot box and to blame you for the position they are in."

The Conservatives, he said, were playing an even more dangerous card by gambling with the unity of Britain itself in claiming that the very integrity of the United Kingdom was only safe in their hands. "It is a desperate Tory line, but it is also a very dangerous Tory line."

## Party's figurehead springs to life

It has been a weird and insubstantial campaign. As in one of those senseless, over-heated dreams where something, some key to understanding it all lies just out of reach, we are always on the brink of discovering what it is about, until ... suddenly we wake up. It is April 10. There is a new government, and nobody ever did explain why. Why, for instance, did it have to be April 9? Already we have forgotten. It seemed important at the time. And who, as we end the campaign, is Neil Kinnock?

One of the most Alice-Through-the-Looking-Glass moments came at the beginning, when John Smith presented his alternative Budget. He did so in the glare of the television lights, with Mr Kinnock, Jack Cunningham, and a bowlful of roses. Journalists assumed that Mr Smith was there to outline the plans. Mr Kinnock was there to take questions with him. Mr Cunningham was there to chair the proceedings, and the roses were there for decoration.

After a few questions to Mr Smith, someone asked Mr Kinnock a question. Mr Cunningham leapt in with the demeanour of a Mad March Hare. The leader was not there to answer questions,

## CAMPAIGN SKETCH

MATTHEW PARRIS

said the Hare. Would the questioner please redirect his enquiry to Mr Smith?

Mr Kinnock sat there mute. He was there for decoration. If Lewis Carroll had scripted this, Mr Cunningham would have allowed roses to answer the next question.

Rather like some regimental mascot, Mr Kinnock has been carried around the country, from ceremony to ceremony, smiling wordlessly for the cameras.

It is possible that the captions to the photographs were written at Walworth Road before the campaign started — the time, the place and the photo opportunity being arranged later. Neil Kinnock with smiling school children — "No, Mr Kinnock will not take questions from the press, only from the children."

Neil Kinnock with happy hospital patients — "No, the patients are not necessarily complaining about the NHS, but Mr Kinnock wanted to meet them anyway." Neil Kinnock with balloons —

where John Major is hindered by fatigue. As the campaign has progressed, the leader of the opposition has looked older, wearier, and full of care. With his new glasses, the crows' feet and sad eyes lend him a statesman-like air. Short of a good night's sleep, Mr Major looks testy and grey.

But no party leader can entirely escape interviews, and Mr Kinnock has fielded his share. Here we have glimpsed the third of his three faces: "Kinnock the wriggler". I watched the interview with Jonathan Dimbleby carefully. This was a most evasive performance, reminding me of someone with whom I never thought Mr Kinnock could be compared: Margaret Thatcher.

None was the wild finger-stabbing, gone the flights of rhetorical fancy, the strings of adjectives, the menagerie of excited abstract nouns. Mr Kinnock held his head still and spoke with a strange, trance-like calm. His sentences, properly analysed, were at best unilluminating and at worst literally nonsensical. Is this man on drugs?

Yes. The drug is called confidence. And it is coursing through Mr Kinnock's veins. Wriggler, not mascot. He has stopped sweating. He looks electable.



Majorettes: Ruth Madoc, Lynsey de Paul, Rani Singh and Elaine Paige, supporting the Tory campaign at Langan's restaurant, London

## Kinnock rounds on 'washed up' government

FROM PHILIP WEBSTER  
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

NEIL Kinnock appealed to the electorate last night to eject a tired washed up government, opening the way for Labour to save the national health service from mortal danger and get Britain working again.

The Labour leader, speaking at the penultimate rally of his election campaign, said that by its vote tomorrow, the nation would decide the future of the health service. The choice facing Britain was between a Tory government of recession and privatisation, and a Labour government of recovery and modernisation.

In his most ferocious attack on the government, he said: "The Tories have no new policies, no new ideas, no positive solutions, no ambition for our country. They are tired, they are washed up. They are like door-to-door salesmen, blue with cold, desperate to find a customer, unable to think of a new angle."

"I say to the British people that after all they have done they simply don't deserve to be re-elected. I simply say that these architects of recession, these engineers of rundown cannot be called upon to build a future."

Speaking in Blackburn, Lancashire, Mr Kinnock issued the strongest warning of the campaign that the NHS

was in peril. He said the service was the benchmark of civilisation in this century, something to be cherished and nurtured, adapted and improved.

"It is in mortal danger. Its whole future rests on the decision we take as a nation when we vote in the general election on Thursday. We can have a health service funded out of general taxation, free to everybody whenever they need it wherever they are, whatever is needed, or we can have a service split from top to bottom by a complex network of charges, of deals between patients and doctors, doctors and hospitals, hospitals and charities, charities and patients. We can have a health

service where the decisions are made by doctors or a service where the decisions are made by accountants.

Britain was the only country in Europe in recession, a country where unemployment, poverty, homelessness and crime have all doubled or more than doubled since Mr Major and his party came to government. It had been the opposite of success. "It has created a 'miraculous' historic success".

"We cannot have them both. If you want the first kind of health service, you vote Labour. If you want the second kind of health service, you vote Tory. Let nobody in Britain be under any illusion that is what is at stake."

Mr Kinnock said Labour had campaigned on positive policies, on issues of concern to the people, homes, schools, health, law and order. It had campaigned on its policies to push back poverty and eradicate the poll tax. Above all, it had campaigned on its policies to get Britain working again. He scorned John Ma-

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## Schools

- Inadequate consultation on reforms
- Academic outcry
- Imposition without consensus approval
- Opting-out of Local Authority control
- Chronic underfunding
- Low staff morale and early retirement
- Increasing reliance on less qualified staff
- Crumbling buildings and lack of maintenance
- Falling standards in the face of increased demands placed by the national curriculum
- Loss of extracurricular subjects
- Increasingly dependent on fundraising and charity for basic equipment
- Less parental choice
- Opt-out schools selecting high achievers and rejecting pupils with special needs

### PARENTS DRIVEN INTO THE PRIVATE SECTOR

### INEQUALITY

## Hospitals

- Inadequate consultation on reforms
- Academic outcry
- Imposition without consensus approval
- Opting-out of Health Authority control
- Chronic underfunding
- Low staff morale and early retirement
- Increasing reliance on less qualified staff
- Crumbling buildings and lack of maintenance
- Falling standards as resources are spent on spiralling administration costs
- Loss of services
- Increasingly dependent on fundraising and charity for basic equipment
- Less patient choice
- Fundholders favouring healthier patients: loss of vulnerable community services for those with high dependency

### PATIENTS DRIVEN INTO THE PRIVATE SECTOR

### INEQUALITY

## A POORLY EDUCATED AND LESS HEALTHY POPULATION

# WHY???

NHS Support Federation  
 National Confederation of Parent Teachers Associations  
 National Union of Students  
 NHS Consultants Association

Labour majority predicted

## Poll contradicts Tory estimate of voting patterns

THE Conservative party has claimed throughout the campaign that the national polls are underestimating the number of seats they will win, because their vote is distributed more effectively across the constituency map than Labour's.

A region-by-region analysis of the large ICM/Press Association poll suggests the contrary. Its result for the country is Conservative 36.2 per cent (down 7.0 on 1987), Labour 38.7 per cent (up 7.2) and Liberal Democrats 20.4 per cent (down 2.7), a swing of 7.1 per cent from Conservative to Labour and of 3.3 per cent from Conservative to the Liberal Democrats.

Repeated in every constituency, these swings would result in Conservatives 290, Labour 311, Liberal Democrats 23, Nazis 10, Irish 17. Labour would be 15 short of an overall majority but could govern with the co-operation of the Liberal Democrats.

Take regional differences in swing into account and the result is: Conservatives 281, Labour 319, Liberal Democrats 21. Labour would be seven short of an overall majority and could manage without the demanding support of the Liberal Democrats: co-operation from Plaid Cymru and the Irish SDLP, which should be fairly easy to secure, would be sufficient.

The regional pattern of swings helps Labour in three ways. First, Labour's "easy" targets — the first 50 — are disproportionately concentrated in the North-West where the swing is below average but not by enough to deprive them of these easy pickings. Second, Labour's

Ivor Crewe finds little comfort for the Conservatives in this week's large national opinion poll

harder targets — in the range 51st to 100th — are disproportionately concentrated in London, where the swing is slightly above the national average. Third, Labour's hardest targets of all — from 101st to 120th — are disproportionately located in the West Midlands, where Labour appears to be enjoying a 10.7 per cent swing.

Some technical caveats about the estimates should be made. The fieldwork for the poll was conducted between last Tuesday and Friday. More recently conducted polls point to a continuing rise in Liberal Democrat support since then, at the expense of the Conservatives.

The Liberal Democrats may well squeeze the Labour vote in the South-East and South-West — as happened in the final few days of the 1983 and 1987 campaigns — but find themselves squeezed by both parties in the Conservative-Labour marginals.

Although the margin of error is only plus or minus 5 per cent for the national figures, given the sample size of 10,460, it is at least plus or minus 3 per cent for the regional sub-samples, whose size is about 800 — the use of decimals rather than rounded whole numbers for regional vote shifts could therefore be over-precise.

Most of the estimated regional swings are corroborated by independent polls. The negligible swing in Scotland

corresponds to separate Scotland-only polls, the massive 10.9 per cent swing in Yorkshire and Humberside is matched by the Mori/Yorkshire Television poll of Conservative marginals and the 7.5 per cent swing in London is close to that reported in last week's Harris/LWT poll. But the below average swings in the South-West and East Anglia are lower than the regional analysis of aggregated Gallup polls — and gloomy Conservative assessments.

Finally, constituency swings can vary within regions as well as between them. Incumbent MPs, especially for the smaller parties, can defy adverse regional swings, as the constituency polls in the Liberal Democrats' super-marginal of Brecon and Radnor suggests.

Ivor Crewe is professor of government at the University of Essex.

### Party predicts gains

## Lib Dems eye West for key successes

BY SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

AS PADDY Ashdown made a final sweep through the West Country yesterday, Liberal Democrat officials were confident of gaining seats there but were cautious about claiming success in some of the constituencies where the party has a high profile.

Des Wilson, the campaign director, said that about ten Tory-held constituencies in Devon, Cornwall and other pockets of old Liberalism dotted around Britain look the most winnable for the Liberal Democrats tomorrow. Mr Wilson expected the best result for the third party since the second world war.

The five-point rise in their poll rating since the start of the campaign puts the Liberal Democrats within sight of the 23 per cent of the vote that the SDP-Liberal Alliance achieved in 1987. In spite of Mr Wilson's optimism, the Liberal Democrats' victories are likely to be balanced by losses of at least two of the 22 seats they held in the last parliament, and the failure to win Labour-held marginals that they have targeted.

The party's most fertile territory for gains from the Conservatives, according to local polls, includes Falmouth and Camborne, where Sebastian Coe is standing for the Tories, North Devon, North Cornwall and South East Cornwall. Hopes are also high in Torbay, Tiverton and St Ives.

The party leadership would be distraught if no more than 15 MPs were returned: mildly depressed with 20; delighted with 25; and delirious with 30-plus.

The indications are that Chris Patten, the chairman of the Conservative party, who had a majority of 1,412 in Bath in 1987, will hold the seat. The Liberal Democrats tend to score well only where their candidates have a strong local record. In Bath their candidate, Don Foster, has been selected recently and comes from Bristol, regarded in Bath as enemy territory.

Liberal Democrat advisers are vaguely uneasy at the prospect of finally wresting Cheltenham from the Conservatives, because such a result could be seen as a racist protest-vote against John Taylor, the Tory candidate, who is black.

The Liberal Democrats are fielding one of their best candidates, Jenny Tonge, a GP, in Richmond and Barnes, but their chances against Jeremy Hanley, the Tory, who had a

majority of 1,766 in 1987, do not look great.

Two seats, Conwy in North Wales and the Isle of Wight, were fairly low down on the target list at the start of the campaign, but have been promoted to the first division of winnable seats. The Liberal Democrats also seem likely to take Hereford.

Liz Lynne, the Liberal Democrat candidate in Rochdale, faces tough competition from Labour after the retirement of Sir Cyril Smith. Eastbourne and Ribble Valley, both won by the Liberal Democrats at by-elections, are also vulnerable.

Seats in the North that the Liberal Democrats have targeted, including Hazel Grove and Colne Valley, might not swing to them because of the three-way split in the vote. Also in doubt, because of the Labour threat, are two of the seats highest on the party's hit list, Portsmouth South and Stockton South both formerly held by the Social Democrats.

Mr Wilson relied for his optimism partly on regional polls, showing the Liberal Democrats on 33 per cent in the South West and 28 per cent in the South East, together with polls published by local newspapers putting the party ahead in Bath, Hazel Grove and Falmouth and Camborne.

Although polls in Scotland have been dismal, falling as low as 7 per cent during the campaign, the Liberal Democrats are expecting to retain most if not all of the ten seats they held there in the last parliament. There are question marks over the constituency of Inverness, Nairn and Lochaber, being defended by Sir Russell Johnston, and North East Fife, being defended by Menzies Campbell. However, Scotland's four-way split and a possible surge by the Scottish nationalists, make the result hard to predict.

In Wales, Richard Livsey will be in a three-way tussle to keep a grip on Brecon and Radnor where he had a majority in 1987 of a mere 56.

The third party has a habit of picking up a few odd seats which had not been marked out highly during the campaign, such as Southport in 1987. The seats that could see surprise Liberal Democrat victories include Liverpool Broad Green, Hastings, Twickenham and East London's Bow and Poplar.



On the run: Nicholas Witchell, the BBC presenter, prepares to run in Sunday's London marathon in aid of St John Ambulance encouraged by Dick Taverne, the former Social Democrat MP, left, Kate Hoey, Labour candidate for Vauxhall, and Richard Tracey, Tory candidate for Surbiton, right

## Molyneaux demands Scottish-style deal for Ulster

BY EDWARD GORMAN  
IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

JAMES Molyneaux, leader of the Ulster Unionist party, said yesterday that he would vote against an attempt by a Labour government to pursue devolution in Scotland if similar arrangements were not offered to Northern Ireland.

Speaking at a press conference in the bomb-damaged headquarters of the UUP in central Belfast, Mr Molyneaux again ruled out any formal

deal between his party's MPs in the new parliament and either of the two main parties. He offered instead an informal understanding based on his party's known objectives. He said that Ulster Unionists recognised the importance of ensuring that a new government could be formed and that his party would not behave in the reckless manner that it believed the Liberal Democrats were threatening.

On Scottish devolution, Mr Molyneaux was unequivocal. He would

oppose a Labour Queen's speech containing it unless Northern Ireland was being offered the same arrangements. There was no reason why Northern Ireland should not be treated similarly, especially since the political parties in the province had more than 50 years' experience of operating devolved structures.

Mr Molyneaux added that it would be unfair to deny devolution to Belfast pending cross-party or cross-community agreement on the structures required since, in Scotland, no

such consensus would be achievable or necessary.

Another issue on which his party would vote with an opposition would be on what Mr Molyneaux called "any further surrender of sovereignty" resulting from the Maastricht treaty on European economic and political union. He said that his MPs would oppose as a matter of principle, and whatever the consequences, the implementation of legislation following on from undertakings made at Maastricht.

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Labour puts faith in civil service

## Kinnock rules out night of long knives

By ROBIN OAKLEY, POLITICAL EDITOR

ONE of the first acts of a Labour government would be to assure Whitehall's mandarins that the civil service will not be politicised. Nor would there be a great clear out of senior figures who have served the Tories over the past 13 years.

Mr Kinnock has told *The Times*: "I've got very strong confidence in the British civil service system and consequently I won't [No 10 be looking over my shoulder at people who've served the immediate two previous prime ministers. I'm certain that they don't operate on a partisan basis and they produce an efficient service. My only test always of everything is 'does it work'?"

Mr Kinnock said that he could offer "a blueprint for the most beneficial but up-to-date reorganisation of the system of government". But he said that such reforms had to await an improvement in the British economy and that even then they should proceed by consensus. "The last thing I want to inflict on the system is turmoil."

He is, however, determined to proceed swiftly with Labour's promised freedom of information act, which is likely to cause some ructions in Whitehall.

Mr Kinnock is sceptical of the value of extending the "cabinet" system of clusters of political appointees around ministers, advocated in a recent speech to the First Division Association of top civil servants by Bryan Gould. Although he does not regard such questions as being in "no-go areas", his colleagues say that the Labour leader believes such appointments would blur lines of responsibility and that he remains to be convinced of their value.

Copies of Labour's manifesto have been distributed throughout Whitehall during the election. Sir Robin Butler, the cabinet secretary, met the shadow cabinet last November for a discussion and shadow ministers have in recent weeks had private consultations with permanent secre-

taries over how Labour's plans for the structure and organisation of departments could be implemented.

Labour is committed to a new ministry for women, a new ministry of the arts, and cabinet places for a minister of environmental protection, a minister for Europe and a minister for international development. Policy documents have also outlined plans for a minister of state for community care, a minister for science and a minister for children.

In addition, plans for various quangos such as a Greater London authority, regional development agencies in England, a national investment bank, education standards commission, food standards agency and a commission for local government have been talked through with officials.

In spite of this, colleagues say that Mr Kinnock would be more like Margaret Thatcher than Harold Wilson or Edward Heath in his attitude to Whitehall. "He won't be a great mover of government Lego blocks," a colleague said yesterday.

"Fundamentally he accepts the structure that is there."

Like Mrs Thatcher, Mr Kinnock is said to see Whitehall restructuring as a distraction from the implementation of policy. If elected, he plans to take the measure of the system during the first extended session of parliament through to the summer of 1993 before consulting with leading civil servants about ways of improving the efficiency of government.

The return to government of John Major would not leave Whitehall undisturbed. Under the plans outlined during the Conservative election campaign there would be the biggest shake-up of responsibilities for two decades.

Under the Conservatives there would be a new cabinet-level post with overall charge of the citizen's charter, monitoring Whitehall efficiency and reforming the civil service. A new ministry of the

arts and national heritage would take over responsibility for broadcasting from the Home Office and for sport from the education department.

The department of energy would be absorbed into a revamped department of trade and industry which would also take responsibility for small businesses from the employment department. Employment would take over the Home Office's responsibilities for science and a minister for women's issues.

In addition, plans for various quangos such as a Greater London authority, regional development agencies in England, a national investment bank, education standards commission, food standards agency and a commission for local government have been talked through with officials.

Labour is expected to look at the Conservatives' proposed reforms and might take some of them.



The right stuff: Guy Hatchard, Natural Law candidate for Epsom and Ewell, demonstrates through a brain-mapping test that he is in the state of 'restful alertness' that makes a good politician (Alison Roberts writes). As journalists

giggled at a press conference yesterday, Mr Hatchard's head was hooked up to electroencephalographic equipment borrowed from the Maharishi Vedic University in Iowa and produced blue and yellow brain patterns of tranquillity and

orderliness. Politicians who have not mastered the art of yogic flying will produce the red brain graphic of tortured agitation. All 310 candidates of the Natural Law party have undergone the test and had their high quality blue brains passed.

## A few days transform absurd forecast into likely result

### RIDDELL ON THE ELECTION

dent. Only Mr Hattersley and John Smith have been in cabinet before, and well over half the likely cabinet have never held even junior office. All know they have to prove themselves. Labour has mainly gained as a result of the recession and public distaste of the Tories after 13 years in office. There have been few signs of active enthusiasm for Labour's programme; the party will have to win support in office for its ideas.

I spent Monday in the Midlands, first with Gordon Brown and then with Tony Blair, and finally at a rally in Birmingham that they both addressed with Roy Hattersley. Mr Brown and Mr Blair will play important roles in office at trade and industry and at employment. Neither has any direct experience of a Labour government. They were not elected until 1983. While both have detailed plans as part of the recovery programme, they are not over-con-

cerned, and constitutional reform. There would deliberately be a lot of common ground with Liberal proposals. That does not mean that Labour would water down its manifesto but that the programme would be difficult for the Lib Dems to reject.

In office, Labour would have strong cards. And Mr Ashdown's strategy could well rebound, not only if his own party splits but if the electorate punishes the Lib Dems at a second election.

Moreover, recent discussion of Mr Kinnock's plan to broaden the membership of the Plant enquiry into electoral reform has distracted attention from his other shift towards emphasising a consensus programme. Mr Hattersley, heart and soul a party man, emphasised in Birmingham how Labour would not "ride roughshod over our opponents. In government, we shall work for consensus."

In practice, a Queen's Speech from a minority government would emphasise economic recovery, boosting the health service and edu-

top in claiming that a Kinnock government would take "Britain's economy on a headlong dive to disaster". It is about as wild as Mr Kinnock's warning that a continuation of Tory government would turn the recession into a slump. There are important differences between both parties' policies but in talk of a choice between disaster and slump is a gross exaggeration.

By contrast, Labour campaigners are almost universally confident. That is partly just the stark contrast with the poor results in 1983 and 1987. But in the Midlands I was struck by how even experienced regional organisers have raised their sights. The party is no longer just expecting to win the Northfield, Selly Oak and Yardley seats in Birmingham, it is talking about capturing Hall Green, Dudley West and Warwickshire North.

Labour believes it will win, or at any rate be the biggest single party. Anything less will be a devastating shock.

Peter Riddell

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## Harassed constituency candidates rush on oblivious of the larger picture

To be a candidate in a general election is a weird experience. For three long weeks you are locked up in a tiny world of your own, oblivious to the outside one, utterly obsessed with the shifts and movements and crises of your own constituency. There is little time to read newspapers, except the local ones, and no time at all to watch television, least of all party political broadcasts.

How are the postal and proxy votes coming along? Why is Mrs Jones, a lifelong Tory, now muttering about voting for the Liberal Democrats? Is it really true that we have found strong support in Ellesmere Avenue? Why is The Crown sporting Labour

**Sir Robert Rhodes James, former Tory MP, still relishes the fight as he campaigns for colleagues in the North**

posters? Why has the Battle Bus broken down again? Why didn't the local paper carry that story we gave them about the Labour candidate's gaffe on council spending? Why won't the hospital let me canvass there?

This is the stuff of the candidate's life. Meals are grabbed, usually as pub lunches: oceans of tea and coffee are drunk; the daily programme of visits, walkabouts, answering letters, and fending off the media seems to get more arduous as polling day ap-

proaches. What is going on elsewhere is of no concern to the candidate and his team, contemptuously chucking the mound of literature from central office into the dustbin.

A parliamentary candidate is, in short, the last person you should seek information from about the general picture. He or she does not give a damn about the general picture.

For the first time in more than 15 years, I am not a candidate, so I set out to the North to support friends who are former colleagues, de-

fending difficult seats. For the first time in an election, I have time to read the papers and watch television.

**T**here is one extraordinary phenomenon of a Conservative campaign that I had not previously realised. When I walked into David Sumner's campaign headquarters in Bury South, the ladies were stuffing envelopes with election literature. I could have sworn that they were the same ones I had left in Cambridge, doing the same job, chattering away, gossiping happily, drinking gallons of tea, and alternating between grumbles and great cheerfulness. But I then found them in other constituencies. It

seemed as though we had a special cohort of these splendid people being taken around the country from constituency to constituency.

Modern elections have become startlingly high-tech, with mobile phones, word processors, computers and faxes. Everyone has a Battle Bus (and who, pray, coined that idiotic description of a tired old van, a Thirties lorry, or a Range-Rover?). It all seems very professional compared with my first experiences in the distant Seventies, but the odd thing is that the essentials remain.

People matter. They have to be found for a huge variety of tasks, from envelope-stuffing to canvassing, writing and

distributing leaflets, monitoring the enemy ("Did she really say she supports the PLO? Check it out, urgently") and picking up gossip in pubs (far more important and useful than the political scientists seem to realise). As Alan Herbert remarked, it never ceased to amaze him that so many people would take so much of their time and energy to get someone else into Parliament.

**B**ut what was The Other Lot doing? As far as we could see, nothing at all. Where were their canvass teams? In Wallasey, we saw a group of Liberal Democrats working a shopping street, without much joy, as far as we

could see, from people whose only interest was in getting home. It was all very cheering.

Thus, for all the high-tech and glossy election addresses, with pretty colour photographs of the candidate and his/her family and dogs, an English campaign is refreshingly old-fashioned, warm and human. I found canvassing for other people far more enjoyable than canvassing for myself.

I was always treated with immense courtesy and friendliness, and not least by a gorgeously pretty young lady in a diminutive bathrobe who, alas, was a schoolteacher active in the National Union of Teachers and Lab-

**Constituency profiles: Jobs stay a big concern with voters whether in the towns or in the countryside**

## Gummer pleads with disaffected farmers not to forsake Tories

BY JOHN YOUNG

A HELICOPTER brought John Gummer, the agriculture minister, to Devon yesterday to warn discontented farmers not to jeopardise their own best interest by dropping their traditional allegiance to the Conservative party and to Emma Nicholson, defending the seat.

Pouring scorn on the European federalist sympathies of the Lib Dems, who are widely expected to make big gains in the South-West, Mr Gummer suggested that anyone who voted for them was voting for the proposals by Raymond MacSharry, the EC agriculture commissioner, to bankrupt British farming by switching resources to southern Europe.

"We are the only party that backs the countryside," he told a polite but sceptical audience of farmers and their families at the Big Sheep, a combined farm and theme park just outside Bideford. To a background of baas and bleats, he described Labour as a party of townies who did not know the first thing about agriculture, and the Liberal Democrats as caring nothing for British interests in their headlong enthusiasm for European integration.

Mr Gummer's strictures may not be enough. Miss Nicholson's majority of just under 6,500 at Devon West and Torridge is considered to be seriously at risk, and a big factor in her possible downfall.

According to Mike Turner, the local Conservative chairman and owner of the Big Sheep, farmers account for about 15 per cent of the constituency's electorate, more than seven times the

population nationally. At least another 15 per cent work in ancillary industries or are otherwise dependent on agriculture.

But these are hard times, and the future of the small family farm in particular is under greater threat than at any time since before the war. To that can be added discontent at the declining quality of

**1987 result:** Miss E H Nicholson (C) 29,484 (60.3%); J P A Burnett (L/All) 23,016 (39.2%); D G Brenton (Lab) 4,990 (8.5%); F Williamson (Grn) 1,168 (2.0%). Conservative majority: 8,488 (11.0%).



urban life, with the loss of local employment, schools, shops, public transport and affordable housing.

The economic situation has compounded their difficulties. Tens of thousands of jobs have disappeared in agriculture and in mining; there are now only about 178,000 full-time farmers, compared with three or four times that number a generation ago.

Farm incomes are at their lowest level for ten years, and

Country people on the whole are unlikely to believe that either Labour or the Liberal Democrats would take a more sympathetic view of their difficulties. But the malaise that is afflicting so many aspects of country life could spring some nasty surprises on the Conservatives at the polls.

The economic situation has compounded their difficulties. Tens of thousands of jobs have disappeared in agriculture and in mining; there are now only about 178,000 full-time farmers, compared with three or four times that number a generation ago.

Farm incomes are at their lowest level for ten years, and



Recruiting drive: Jackie Ballard greeting a voter in her effort to overturn a 10,000 Tory majority in Taunton

## Rasputin's double succumbs to Paddy factor

BY BILL FROST

WITH a friend like that, who needed enemies, Jackie Ballard, the Liberal Democrat candidate for Taunton, would have been perfectly entitled to ask. A tall, gaunt, bearded political admirer was parading up and down the shopping precinct scaring the voters with bizarre election pledges and warnings of Armageddon.

"Oh, no! Do something quick," Ms Ballard hissed. By now, the man, who could have been Rasputin's identical twin, had transferred his attention from a small child to an elderly woman. Waving a Lib Dem placard frantically, he backed the terrified pensioner against a litter bin and hectored her mercilessly. "You shouldn't be talking on my behalf really," Ms Ballard said. The mild rebuke went unnoticed as the man

stared into the middle distance and warned shoppers about meltdown at Hinckley Point nuclear power station.

Earlier, Ms Ballard found herself the victim of vindictive rummants at the town's livestock market, treading in something dreadful. Bearded men and other hazards apart, the campaign is going well for Ms Ballard. So well in fact, that the Tories in Taunton, defending a majority last time of 10,380, have said the result appears to be "neck and neck".

On the Halton council estate, where every home comes with a rotweiler or martingale, former Labour supporters are coming over to Ms Ballard in droves. "I believe in the Labour, but we've no chance here in Taunton," Marlene Smith said. "Your policies make a lot of sense too, so, to keep the Tories out, you can count on us." Her husband nodded vigorously.

Back on the street, Ms Ballard leapt smartly out of the path of a battered car and ignored a shouted insult. "You can't win them all," she laughed nervously as the drizzle became a downpour.

Still, there was consolation on the next doorstep. Pamela Hogan, once a staunch Tory, said: "I've just become so disillusioned. All those promises and we end up with recession and poll tax. I won't forgive them for that, nor will thousands of others here in Taunton."

Some of the farmers are

deserting the Tories too. Andy Harding, aged 41, has given up rearing cattle and become an auctioneer's assistant at the livestock market. "I've put my farm up for sale because of the recession they caused. I've got to sell if I'm to pay off my debts."

Colin Hutchings, a sheep farmer, had lost faith in the Conservatives too. "They got us into this stump but they can't get us out. It's time someone else had a chance, couldn't be any worse," he said.

In the far western corner of the constituency, on Exmoor, another spectacular conversion has been achieved. Rohais Thomas-Everard, landowner and breeder of Arab horses, has parted company with the Conservatives and started campaigning for the Liberal Democrats. Such is her dedication to her new cause that she has posed rather stiffly for pictures with Ms Ballard which now feature on the front of a Liberal Democrat newsletter.

Ms Ballard attributed much of her apparent success in Taunton to the "Paddy factor". "Yeovil is our neighbouring constituency and Paddy Ashdown has been very high profile in Somerset for years," she said. "Traditionally the South-West used to be strongly Liberal, and now the message is getting across: the voters want a change and the old two-party loyalty has gone."

David Nicholson, the Tory candidate, said that he was not surprised that the Liberal Democrats were feeling reasonably encouraged. "There's no doubt they're better organised than five years ago and have worked hard in preparation. I don't feel under threat but I'm not complacent either."

The services of his local MP. "Well, we got Ted to open our extension," he says after some thought. Ted Leadbitter, who has retired after 40 years as councillor and MP, was much respected, even by local Tories.

On the shop floor amid clattering machinery — all German — Mr Mandelson enthuses: "This is the model of what I want in Hartlepool, competitive, highly customised and with a big investment in technology."

Hartlepool certainly needs jobs. Ten thousand were lost between 1980 and 1985 and 2,000 in the past two years. Mr Mandelson links unemployment to rising crime.

"Jobs and police are the answer here, not social workers and softer sentences."

The question is whether an Oxford graduate is the answer here. The Tory camp says that when he put up a management consultant from Surrey in 1987, the party lost by 7,289, but when it fielded a local man in 1983 it lost only by 3,090. Its contender this time is Graham Robb, aged 28, a local public relations consultant.

Mr Mandelson has an important promise up his sleeve. Labour, he says, will not implement the Taylor committee report on making football grounds all-seater. If Hartlepool FC, struggling up the Third Division, were forced to comply, it would almost certainly join the town's business casualties.

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## Man with a ladder makes Fintry's Tories see red

ON THE evidence of the posters plastered over Fintry, a village on the upper reaches of the Endrick valley, its inhabitants were praying last night for a new, socialist dawn. Not a single Conservative poster could be found: the place was a sea of red.

Could this whole village, with its white-washed cottages, hanging baskets, horse boxes and Mercedes parked in the main street, really have defected to Labour? Surely someone, somewhere must vote Tory. If not, then it was a bad omen for Michael Forsyth, the Scottish minister of state, who is defending his Fintry seat, fighting to retain, and perhaps improve on, his majority of 548, the second smallest in Scotland.

Further investigation was required. A man outside the village shop gave a knowing laugh. Then a teenage girl explained. On Sunday night one of the locals had emerged from the inn after several refreshments. Feeling in the mood for a weeze, he had apparently gone home, fetched a ladder and proceeded, giggling, to remove all the Tory posters from every lamp, garden gate, tree and telegraph pole in the village. Trouble was, someone tipped off the local Con-

servative "high heid yin", who turned him round Fintry in her outrage, increasing with every poster that fluttered to the ground.

The police were told and yesterday a spokesman said the matter was being investigated. Apparently, the police had arrived and asked a girl if she had seen a man with a ladder. She said she didn't know anyone who drove a Lada in Fintry. It is that kind of village.

Fourteen miles away, on the Rapioch housing estate in Stirling, there was a similar dearth of Tory posters, but for rather different reasons. "The Rapioch" has one of the worst reputations for deprivation, and all the ill that condition brings, in central Scotland. John McDonald was outside his council flat exercising Tyson, his dog. "Are you the poll tax man?" he asked. Mr McDonald, on income support, said that many people on the Rapioch had not

paid their poll tax. The poll tax might be an old issue among most of the electorate, but not on the Rapioch, a grey, treeless huddle of ageing council houses beneath Stirling Castle. Mr McDonald said that he had paid the first year, paid half his bill the second year and nothing this year. The upshot, a familiar tale on the estate, was that his debt was being reduced forcibly by about £2 a week off his ground.

"Michael Forsyth the man might be all right, but he is just a yes-man for Maggie," he said. But Margaret Thatcher was long gone, surely. "Maggie is still the issue in Stirling. She gets the blame for the poll tax and all that is bad about the Tories. You have to pay to put clothes and shoes on your bairns, then they take the money back in poll tax. This estate is 95 per cent Labour and maybe 5 per cent SNP," Mr McDonald added. "You won't find any Tories here."

"There is no doubt Mr Forsyth's strong following in the largely rural constituency, however. Even the grumbling farmers, many of whom have threatened to give the Tories a fright, are expected to "come to mummy" tomorrow. Mr Forsyth is also acknowledged to be an excellent constituency man and, more importantly for tomorrow's result, the resurgence of the nationalists could eat into Labour's vote."

Huge sums of public and private money are being spent on Stirling, its riverfront and, particularly, its historic centre that overlooks the Rapioch before the rather better view of the Trossachs to the north. On the estate they are not impressed. One man said: "People here live on the bare necessities. They are scared to leave their houses in case they lose what little they have got. Then they are spending millions up there," he said pointing towards the castle.

Mr Forsyth's main threat comes from Kate Phillips, the Labour candidate. She is convinced that Mr Forsyth's style of conviction politics and his unpopularity with the opposition parties generally will encourage tactical voting to get rid of him.

There is no doubt Mr Forsyth's strong following in the largely rural constituency, however. Even the grumbling farmers, many of whom have threatened to give the Tories a fright, are expected to "come to mummy" tomorrow. Mr Forsyth is also acknowledged to be an excellent constituency man and, more importantly for tomorrow's result, the resurgence of the nationalists could eat into Labour's vote."

Further west, in villages such as Killearn, Gargunnock, Aberfoyle, Kippen and Fintry, the Tory vote strengthens, pranksters notwithstanding. If the election could be won on the size of posters, Michael Forsyth would have a landslide victory. Mrs Thatcher, for instance, had a rapturous welcome in Killearn the other day.

In the centre of Stirling yesterday, Mr Forsyth was upbeat, confident and clearly well liked. While he chatted to passers-by an altercation developed between the Labour and SNP camps on the other side of the street. A Labour campaigner started yelling at the nationalists, decrying Gerry Fisher, their candidate.

The man would not shut up despite the pleas of his colleagues. What with the run-up to the election, it has been a long campaign. Mr Fisher had just finished telling everyone to vote SNP for no nuclear weapons, no poll tax, no phoney double-glazing salesmen. He could stand the man's interruptions no longer. Mr Fisher picked up a megaphone and, to cheers from the crowds, screamed: "Be quiet or, alternatively, keep your big fat mouth shut!"

Jackie in Taunton

## Property market

## House prices most at risk in South-East

BY ANATOLE KALETSKY, ECONOMICS EDITOR

A FURTHER sharp drop in house prices seems likely in London and the South-East if Labour wins the election, but the outlook for housing in the rest of the country may depend less on tomorrow's poll than on the state elections held in Germany last Sunday.

Most of the predictions about a house-price "meltdown" after a Labour victory are driven by fears of high interest rates, rather than high taxes, under Labour. But, while Labour's plans for punitive taxes on the rich have been spelt out, it is pure guesswork whether interest rates would rise or fall if John Smith moved into 11 Downing Street.

The prospects for British interest rates will depend mainly on the decisions made in Frankfurt by the Bundesbank. The chances are that interest rates will not start to fall at least until the autumn. But given the political uncertainty in Germany, France and Italy, there seems no reason why Britain should have to increase its premium over German rates just because it joins the club of European nations without a clear majority government.

If interest rates are taken out of the picture, as more or less outside Britain's control, the potential impact of a Labour government on the housing market can be reduced to two opposing forces.

On one hand there will be sharp reductions in the disposable incomes of affluent professionals and managers. These are bound to hit the entire property market in London and the South-East, as well as undermining the value of high-priced properties and second homes in the rest of the country. The average new mortgage in London

	Average house price £	Average advance £	Average income of borrowers £	% loans to first time buyers
Northern Ireland	46,389	34,111	17,480	38
Yorkshire & Humber	52,943	37,514	18,083	42
East Midlands	48,514	34,514	18,977	49
East Anglia	63,760	43,189	20,392	45
Greater London	89,358	60,023	27,005	54
South East (excl GL)	79,769	52,958	23,525	42
South West	68,322	44,684	20,860	45
West Midlands	62,578	41,428	18,487	43
North West	59,265	38,467	18,053	46
Wales	51,414	36,467	18,306	50
Scotland	48,910	35,531	18,587	40
Northern Ireland	37,197	27,667	17,125	52
United Kingdom	63,928	43,958	20,699	45

Source: The Building Societies Association and Department of the Environment.

### What the experts predict after poll

Rachel Kelly finds evidence that a Tory victory would be the best outcome for a recovery in the property market

## Housing analyst

John Wrigglesworth, UBS Phillips and Drew

"If the Tories win the election, we expect a reduction in base rates by at least 1 per cent, which will be the key to recovery. But fears of unemployment will mean that house prices will not start recovering until the middle of the year after falls of 4 to 5 per cent."

"Labour's tax plans are bad news. People in the higher income bracket will put off buying, so there will be a disabling effect at the top end. But only about 10 per cent of mortgage borrowers are top-rate taxpayers and claims that the market will collapse are exaggerated."

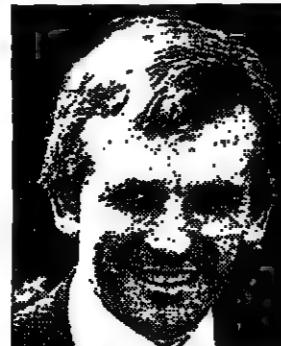
"Our forecast is that interest rates will rise 0.5 per cent if Labour is elected. As a result, prices could easily fall by another 5 per cent this year but there could still be a recovery next year. If the City reads badly and interest rates rise 2 or more per cent it will be a devastating blow."

## Estate agent

Patrick Ramsey, senior partner, Knight Frank and Rutley

"If the Tories win, there will be an initial surge of activity from vendors and purchasers who have been holding back until after the election. This will be followed by a steady market recovery."

"There is nothing to stop prices falling by 10 per cent under a Labour government."



## Building industry



## Building society manager

David Blake, group head of corporate affairs manager, Woolwich building society

"A Tory win would immediately remove people's uncertainty on their personal finances. The housing market should begin to show signs of recovery shortly after the election."

"Labour's tax plans would cause a redistribution of income that would do little to stimulate demand at the lower and mid sections of the market while reducing demand at the upper end. Overall this would result in weaker market activity than under the Tories."



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"There is nothing to stop prices falling by 10 per cent under a Labour government."



Housing assault: Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, claimed yesterday that Labour would have to put up interest rates

## Heseltine leads onslaught on Labour economic plans

BY ROBIN OAKLEY, POLITICAL EDITOR

LABOUR'S policies would cut take-home pay and push up interest and mortgage rates, Michael Heseltine said yesterday. "Labour would stop home buyers trading up, frustrate the ambitions of first-time buyers and slash consumer spending through much higher mortgage payments."

"A Kinnock government would have to put up interest rates because the financial markets don't trust Labour. On average, a family's mortgage would go up by £17 a month. And at the same time the value of their home would fall. That means less money in people's pockets, which means less spending. That means less demand for industry's products, which means less work for industry and job losses — higher unemployment under Labour."

Mr Heseltine's assault was part of a Conservative effort to brand Labour as a party that would wreck Britain's hopes of coming out of recession. He quoted a report from the National Council of Building Material Producers which predicted that a Labour victory and the associated increases in taxation would

"hold back house price stabilisation" and deter first-time buyers.

He added: "Behind this statement lay a powerful and damaging analysis of the impact of Labour's economic plans on the housing and construction markets. In 1993, the construction industry's expert panel expects 160,000 private housing completions under a re-elected Conservative government as compared to only 100,000 under Labour."

"Turning to housing starts under a Conservative government the construction industry expects 155,000 starts in 1993, compared to just 100,000 under Labour. The devastating result would be that over 20,000 fewer houses would be built in 1992 under a Labour government and well over 40,000 fewer homes would be built in 1993. Overall, the industry itself predicts that Labour's policies would cost the construction industry £4 billion and up to 100,000 jobs."

Mr Heseltine went hell for leather after his party's opponents, insisting: "A Kinnock government would take Britain's economy on a headlong

drive to disaster. Labour's policies would devastate the housing market and shove up interest rates, throttling the recovery."

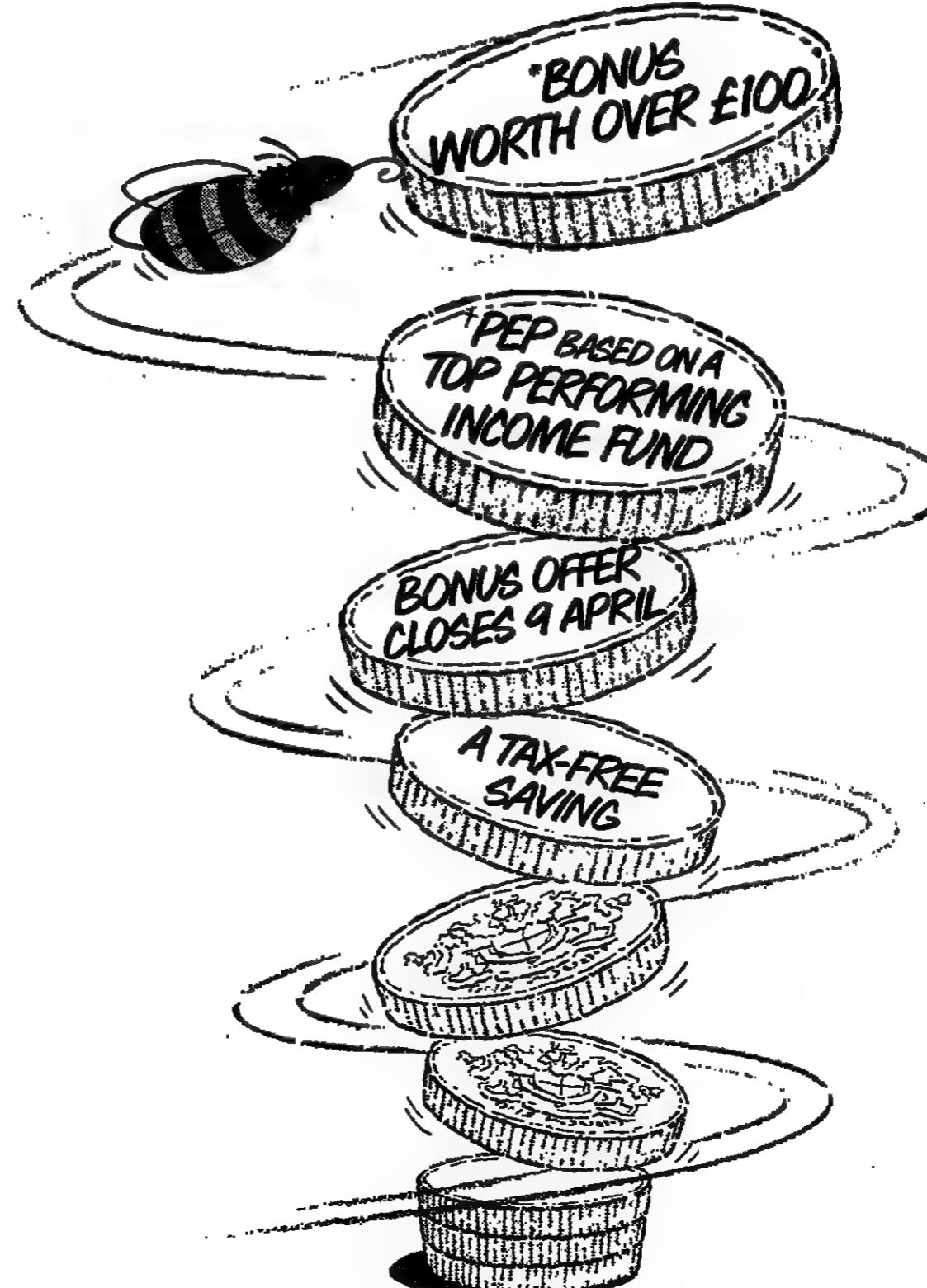
John Major accentuated the positive, hailing a Dun and Bradstreet survey which showed business confidence rising and quoting poll evidence that four out of five businesses believed the economy would improve if the Tories were re-elected. Mr Major told the party's daily news conference in London: "The economic circumstances are right and recovery is on the way."

Norman Lamont, Chancellor of the Exchequer, repeated the charge that Labour's manifesto spending plans were unaffordable without swinging tax increases. The manifesto plans, he said, would cost the equivalent of 12.5p on the basic rate of income tax. "Labour would bring high taxes for everyone. High taxes," he added, "would stifle incentives, destroy confidence and kill the recovery stone dead."

Mr Major concluded: "The return of a Conservative government this Thursday is essential for recovery."

N&P - N&P UK Income Fund - First place in the Micropal Unit Trust UK Equity Income sector for 1991 for Ten Year Performance to end 1991. Source: Micropal offer to bid for income remunerated. 11121112 N&P UK Income Fund (Micropal) Key Income Fund. The levels and bases of taxation can change and the value of tax relief depends on individual circumstances. This is an appointed representative of N&P Life Assurance Ltd and N&P Unit Trust Management Ltd, which are regulated in the conduct of investment business by SIB. Consequently, we can only advise on the life assurance and pension products of N&P Life and the unit trust and PEP products of N&P Unit Trust Management Ltd. THE VALUE OF UNITS AND THE INCOME FROM THEM CAN GO DOWN AS WELL AS UP AND THE INVESTOR MAY NOT GET BACK THE AMOUNT INVESTED. PAST PERFORMANCE IS NOT NECESSARILY A GUIDE TO FUTURE PERFORMANCE. National & Provincial Building Society, Provincial House, Bradford BD1 1NL.

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# Clinton banks on New Yorkers to seal nomination

FROM PETER STOTHARD, US EDITOR, IN NEW YORK

AMERICAN Democrat leaders watched anxiously yesterday for the first results from the New York, Wisconsin and Kansas primaries. Wins for Bill Clinton would mean a clear road to the presidential nomination for a candidate who many think unelectable. Any stumbles by the front-runners, especially in New York, could open the way for new candidates to enter the race. But decisions on how and who would have to be made fast.

Early exit polls showed Mr Clinton leading in all three states but with Paul Tsongas, whose name was on the ballot, even though he did not campaign, scoring heavily among Jewish voters in New York. Pollsters predicted that, with black votes following Jesse Jackson's lead into the Jef-



ry Brown camp, the result could be close.

In the Clinton camp the view was that, with more than half the necessary delegates won before New York, the victory was already theirs. Only a "maximum scandal" could take it away from them, one adviser said. The cam-

paign in New York, where 244 delegates were at stake, was the most important for a month. But, although it was fun for New Yorkers to see Mr Clinton and Mr Brown humiliated by the media, the forecast turnout was still low. Pundits argued that this could be used as an additional reason to pull Mr Tsongas out of retirement or to draft a senior figure who had not fought in the primaries.

It would be hard, however, for those perennial non-candidates, Senator Lloyd Bentsen and Al Gore, Congressman Richard Gephardt and Mario Cuomo, the New York governor, to get their names on the remaining ballots. Although with goodwill and a good legal team anything may be possible, even though the filing deadlines have past.

It would be still harder to explain to the American people why, in this year of the outsider, when professional politicians are as popular as child-molesters, the people's primary choice had to be supplanted by someone who chose not to submit himself to the voters' scrutiny.

"Amen to that," said a young Italian-American after voting in Greenwich Village yesterday. He said he had voted for Mr Brown but was sure that neither of the choices on offer could beat George Bush in November. Many influential Republicans are not so sure about that. Using a rule-of-thumb that two-thirds of dissatisfied voters vote against the incumbent president and three-quarters of satisfied voters vote for him, Mr Bush is not safe. Some two-thirds of the electorate think that the country is heading in the wrong direction — the figure that probably matters more and explains more than any other.

Mr Brown appealed to the strong sense in America this year that the whole system is rotten and needs rebuilding. His final campaign call in Brooklyn on Monday night was: "Take it back, America, take it back". Fewer agreed with his solutions than with his analysis. While supporters waited for his appearance at rallies they listened to Sixties poets and talked about the newly opened "old-style" baseball stadium in Baltimore where fans can pretend that the Fifties never finished.

Mr Clinton formed his final appeal around the message that he had given "a lifetime of commitment and service".

On Monday evening, members of the Peruvian congress had tried to meet at the offices of the Peruvian Bar Association. Their goal, said conservative senator, Manuel Moreyra, was "to go into session and declare the presidency vacant". Under Peru's democratic constitution, written and approved at the end of a military dictatorship in 1979, congress can accuse the president of sedition or moral incapacity and remove him from office.

One radio station has been closed down, and Luis Casas, a journalist from SI, a weekly, said his publication had been shut and its files taken. Desperation may have helped convince most people to accept the coup. More than 90 per cent in Lima have no steady job. The legal minimum monthly wage is the equivalent of \$75, but the cost of living rivals America. In addition to political violence by Shining Path guerrillas, common crime has shot up.

Latest details, page 1  
Verse and worse, page 16

## US halts aid to Peru and recalls official mission

FROM JAMIE DETTMER IN WASHINGTON AND CORINNE SCHMIDT IN LIMA

AMERICA has suspended an aid programme worth more than \$250 million (£143 million) to Peru and denounced President Fujimori's seizure of power as a "regrettable step backwards" for democracy in the region.

"The United States calls for the full and immediate restoration of constitutional democracy, which must include immediate freedom for those detained," Richard Boucher, a State Department spokesman, said.

As a further sign of anger, an American diplomatic mission that arrived in Lima only hours after the coup was recalled yesterday. Argentina also offered asylum to Alan Garcia, the former president, yesterday.

In an emergency meeting, the permanent council of the 34-nation Organisation of American States decided to call a meeting of Latin American foreign ministers "in a matter of days" for a discussion on what further measures can be taken against President Fujimori. State Department officials are particularly concerned that the presidential coup cripples American efforts to combat the drug trade in Peru, the world's largest producer of the coca leaf, the raw material for cocaine.

Police armed with guns, clubs and tear gas stopped an attempt by the Peruvian Congress to meet in defiance of President Fujimori on Monday. Lima was mainly calm yesterday and military vehicles had been withdrawn from most of the streets. But

one radio station has been closed down, and Luis Casas, a journalist from SI, a weekly, said his publication had been shut and its files taken. Desperation may have helped convince most people to accept the coup. More than 90 per cent in Lima have no steady job. The legal minimum monthly wage is the equivalent of \$75, but the cost of living rivals America. In addition to political violence by Shining Path guerrillas, common crime has shot up.

His aim was to assure voters that the adulterous draft-dodger with an extremist wife is a parody created by the tabloid press; and that "the real Bill Clinton" is the man to win back the White House for the Democrats.

Latest details, page 1  
Verse and worse, page 16

## Mines litter road to peace in Cambodian hinterland

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN RUNDAS, CAMBODIA

TWO uniformed men were standing on a road planted thick with landmines. One officer bowed slightly, extended his arm and said to the other: "After you. The second insisted: "No, please, after you." The scene was like an old music hall routine.

Deserted Rundas is a strange venue for farce. The players were unusual too, a Khmer Rouge general and a colonel in the Phnom Penh regime's army, bitter foes now trying tentatively to work

together in harmony. They had just shaken hands in this frontline village on Highway 12 in central Kompong Thom province, where continued fighting has delayed the first deployment of troops of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia, slowing implementation of a UN peace plan.

The Khmer Rouge had attacked Rundas and planted the mines, but had been driven out. Now Phnom Penh troops were trying to de-mine this key road. Almost every time they exploded one of the Chinese-made devices the Khmer Rouge began shelling from surrounding forests.

Brigadier General Chu Chin, a commander in the Khmer Rouge 616 division, was accompanying a small UN reconnaissance party to see whether a company of 195 Indonesian troops now in the provincial capital, 22 miles to the south, could be deployed to separate the two forces. Clearly, with no meaningful ceasefire in effect, no deployment was yet possible.

Colonel Kol Vay, the Phnom Penh commander here, told the Khmer Rouge general: "The mines were planted by people on your side. Please walk in front of me and show me where they are." The general replied: "They were placed by another of our division, the 802nd. I don't know where they put them, so I would rather not walk ahead. After you."

Colonel Kol Vay said later:

"The Khmer Rouge killed ten of my family members and this is the first time I shook hands with one of them. But we are all Cambodian brothers, and I think we can work together." He said that, without interference, the road to Preah Vihear province, now cut off, could be cleared in ten days. If the Khmer Rouge continued to shell, or to plant new mines, it could take three months.

calls the enforced eviction of Muslims living in the Burmese state of Arakan. Dhaka claimed up to 170,000 Muslim refugees from Arakan have crossed into Bangladesh since December. Rangoon claimed they were illegal migrants from Bangladesh.

U Gyaw said his government was processing a list of names supplied by Dhaka of 37,000 people who claim to have legal residence papers in Burma. The figure tallied with Rangoon's own census. U Gyaw claimed that up to half a million Bangladeshi nationals were living illegally in Arakan state.

## Burma offers to take back some refugees

FROM ABBY TAN IN RANGOON

THE American vice-president Dan Quayle will be among guests attending a ceremony in Tokyo next month to mark the 20th anniversary of Okinawa's reversion from the United States to Japan.

Mother Teresa has told Pete Wilson, the governor of California, that Jesus would have forgiven a convicted killer who is scheduled for execution this month, and suggested that he do the same. Robert Alton Harris is due to die in the gas chamber on April 21 for murdering two teenagers.



Business and pleasure: at the autumn fashion show in New York, a model, left, provides a feminine parody of "power-dressing". She wears a navy pin-stripe ribbed wool jersey blend



Autumn fashion show, a stylishly primitive look: the model wears a revealingly cut leopard print halter-neck top and a short skirt decorated with long fringes.

## Gloom in Arab capitals deepens as protests greet UN envoy in Libya

FROM MARIE COLVIN IN TRIPOLI AND RICHARD BEESTON IN CAIRO

AS ARAB League foreign ministers met in Cairo yesterday in search of a face-saving solution for Libya over the Lockerbie confrontation, Vladimir Petrovsky, the United Nations envoy, was forced by sit-in students to halt in his official car about 100 yards from his Tripoli hotel.

He sat expressionless in the car as about 100 students, blocking the drive of al-Mahari hotel, looking out over Tripoli harbour, shouted: "The UN is finished," and some anti-American slogans.

His police motorcycle escort waited 15 minutes before moving to break up the youths. Mr Petrovsky and his aides were ushered inside as several hundred other students, chanting and waving placards, marched up the corniche. Soldiers, perhaps fearing a repetition of last week's violence when the Venezuelan embassy was sacked and burnt, fired off rounds of tear gas as the excited youths jostled forward.

Foreign ministers from seven Arab League countries gathered at the organisation's headquarters in Cairo in an apparently doomed effort to find a compromise. None held out much hope of a breakthrough at this late stage, particularly after the demonstration in Tripoli.

Amr Moussa, the Egyptian foreign minister, said: "There are many proposals under discussion, but they all fall within the framework of security council resolutions. The aim of the (Arab League) committee is to contain the situation, confirm the Arab position opposing terrorism, solve the problem in the framework of international sovereignty and provide a solution which all parties will agree to."

The Tripoli demonstration appeared to be an attempt to show that Libyans stand with

Colonel Muammar Gadaffi in his anger at the UN decision last week to impose arms, air and diplomatic sanctions on Libya unless two Libyans, suspected of placing a bomb aboard the PanAm jet that exploded over Lockerbie, were handed over for trial.

Surrounded by Libyan and Russian bodyguards as he entered the hotel's marble lobby, Mr Petrovsky could say only that he planned to stay until tomorrow. Russian diplomats said he hoped to meet Colonel Gadaffi.

Libyan police and soldiers cordoned off the streets behind the hotel for the remainder of the day. For the UN envoy it was a reminder of how difficult a mission he faces as he attempts to seek a compromise with the Libyan leader to head off the sanctions, scheduled to go into effect next Wednesday.

Earlier, Mr Petrovsky had

remained optimistic. "I deeply believe that even at this stage there is still an opportunity to overcome the crisis and find a solution through the security council," he said.

But there is little sign that Colonel Gadaffi is in any mood to hand over the two suspects, both Libyan intelligence agents. He has been silent about Mr Petrovsky's visit and Libyan newspapers ignored his arrival.

Libyans are nervous that sanctions will make life far more difficult and hope that some solution can be found. "What do you think? Can the Soviets help us?" a Libyan engineer said over coffee in Green Square at the centre of Tripoli. "All we want to do is live in peace and get on with our own business, we want nothing to do with politics."

Marie Colvin is on the staff of *The Sunday Times*.

Latest details, page 1  
Burnt and worse, page 16

## Iran embraces Thatcher's ideas on economic reform

THATCHERISM may be dead in Britain, but an Iranian version is thriving in Iran where the symbol of the economic revolution is the newly revived stock exchange on which many fortunes were made during last year's boom when prices jumped seven

cent since the market re-opened the acceptability it once enjoyed under the Shah.

"We never actually closed, but after the Islamic revolution, the volume of business was so small we did not function," said Mr Nejhad. "Things are now so busy, we are moving to a much bigger new building in six months and planning to introduce full computerisation."

At first glance, the main differences in the exchange from those in the Far East, on which it is modelled, are the absence of ties — still regarded as an unacceptable sign of bourgeois decadence — new technology, and the veils worn by all women.

Iran's mullahs are among those who have profited from the stock boom and the new spirit of entrepreneurship. Recently, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the spiritual leader, went so far as to warn brash clerics bidding too lavishly to abandon their expensive homes and BMWs or risk losing the trust of the people.

Deregulation and privatisation have been at the core of President Rafsanjani's attempt to rescue Iran's centralised economy and, earlier this year, shares in the ten main motor manufacturers

were put up for sale. Western diplomats say the controls are being dismantled much faster than expected.

Apart from parliamentary opposition to the liberalisation, there have also been violent protests. Late last year, there were mysterious fires in the Tehran bazaar. Slogans such as "Hashemi Shah" and "death to the anti-people regime of Rafsanjani" began to appear.

At the stock exchange, ordinary people as well as the merchant classes are among those now buying shares. "The enthusiasm to buy shares is so great we are going to set up a system for brokers' offices to be established in the main provincial cities as well as the capital," said the impeccably dressed Mr Nejhad.

"At present, the only way people there can buy shares is through the banks."

Other signs of the changes in society being encouraged by the pragmatists have been an upsurge of English language teaching and a move towards setting a realistic exchange rate for the rial. Gillette, the razor manufacturer, has returned but shares of foreign companies cannot be quoted on the exchange.

## Malawi is asked to free trade unionist

London: Britain yesterday called for the immediate release of the human rights crusader and South African union chief, Chakufwa Chihana, who was arrested in Malawi on Monday.

The Foreign Office yesterday raised the matter with Malawi's High Commissioner in London, and is likely to issue a demarche with European Community partners.

"We had forewarned the Malawi authorities prior to his return that we expected him to be treated properly," the Foreign Office said.

Mr Chihana, aged 52, the secretary-general of the Southern African Trade Union Co-ordination Council, has been critical of Dr Hastings Banda's government and its human rights record. He was detained by police on arrival in Lilongwe from Johannesburg.

### Links agreed

Abidjan: Ivory Coast and South Africa are to establish diplomatic ties at ambassadorial level. Ivory Coast is the first black African nation to accord Pretoria full diplomatic recognition since President de Klerk began scrapping apartheid laws. (Reuters)

### Premier named

Bangkok: General Suchinda Kraprayoon, Thailand's supreme military commander, was named as prime minister, a document issued by the palace said. Crowds gathered to protest against the appointment of a non-elected prime minister. (Reuters)

### Flight planned

Peking: China plans to launch a manned spacecraft by the year 2000, the New China News Agency said. Peking hopes to develop a space station to serve as an orbiting laboratory as well as a mission control centre for manned flights. (Reuters)

### Official injured

Hong Kong: A man injured two police officers, a government official and a contract worker with a meat cleaver as the government tried to evict his family and other residents from Hong Kong's Walled City ahead of the demolition of the lawless enclave. (AFP)

### Coin minted

Sydney: Australia has launched the kookaburra, a 2.2lb silver coin, delayed twice to build up enough stocks to meet an expected flood of orders. The coin, named after the Australian kingfisher, will be worth about \$83.73. (Reuters)

### Kiev sent aid

Taipei: Taiwan's medical aid to Ukraine includes 100,000 extra-large condoms, state television said. The "American and European-size" condoms are 4in longer than Taiwanese condoms. The aid, worth £18,850, was flown directly to Kiev. (Reuters)

### Boycal

WIDE: An American Democratic Party member, left, and a member of the Chinese People's Democratic Party, right, shake hands at a press conference in Beijing. The Chinese party is to be better represented in the 1997 elections. (AP)

### Boycal

WIDE: A man from the Chinese People's Democratic Party, right, and a member of the Chinese People's Democratic Party, left, shake hands at a press conference in Beijing. The Chinese party is to be better represented in the 1997 elections. (AP)

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### Boycal

WIDE: A man from the Chinese People's Democratic Party, right, and a member of the Chinese

Malawi  
asked to  
free trade  
unionist

London: Brian

Shuttleworth

has called

for a

new

## Woodrow Wyatt

The voters will spot that Labour's plans spell bankruptcy

**O**n November 20, 1990, before the first round of the Tory leadership contest, I wrote here that if Mrs Thatcher were deposed I would "advise my millions of *News of the World* readers to vote for Mr Kinnock". So why have I advised them to vote for Mr Major? Because Mrs Thatcher, to whom I remain close, passionately wants him to win. She is convinced that in his own style he is committed to thrusting forward the revolution she started and which transformed Britain. She is certain a Kinnock victory would spin us back to the quiescence 1970s, and that it would take a following Tory government ten years to undo the damage. Who am I to disagree with Mrs Thatcher?

Supervise the polls look bad for a Tory overall majority. But the much-vaunted ICM/PA poll of 10,460 voters giving Labour a 2.5 per cent lead was flawed. The interviews covered only half the constituencies and were conducted between Tuesday and Friday last week. As Harold Wilson remarked, "a week is a long time in politics". So far the rival statistics have prevented us seeing the simple truth, but it is fast becoming clear. John Smith made several assertions last week. He would not devalue the pound. To keep it stable he would use up Bank of England reserves, put up interest rates and impose personal and business credit controls. He would not seek to hold inflation at its present 4.1 per cent or drive it lower, but considers the average EC 5.5 per cent rate acceptable.

Foreign money men are not stupid. Already fearing a socialist win most of them, like the Saudi Arabians, have started shifting investments from Britain. If the socialists actually won, the rush would be a torrent. To hold the pound and retrieve foreign money would need a long spell of very high interest rates of around 17 per cent. Mortgage payments and house repossessions would soar. Credit controls on buying goods mean higher deposits and shorter repayment terms. This plus much higher interest rates would kill recovery, and unemployment would gather headlong pace.

John Smith would be unable to control inflation, which would soon approach the 27 per cent achieved by the last Labour government. The tiny national gains offered to voters in Mr Smith's alternative budget would vanish as inflation savaged the value of pensions and all in the land found themselves far worse off. That is one clear, simple, truthful message Mr Major should hammer today: recovery is impossible under the socialists.

He must ram home too the sharp difference between Tories and Labour on immigration. The Tories intent to keep it to an absolute minimum. The socialists would let it rip, obeying the new EC immigrant quota rules, reversing the Asylum Bill's screening of the 90 per cent bogus political refugee applications from the 45,000 applying annually, as well as allowing in the usual 50,000 a year from the new Commonwealth and elsewhere. (If Britain is as ghastly as Mr Kinnock says, why do so many want to come here?) Voters, of whatever ethnic origin, are terrified of changing our present peaceful balanced society into one torn by racial strife at least 150,000 new immigrants arrive each year. They know that in Germany and France, excessive immigration has led to the dramatic rise of extreme right-wing racist parties.

Today Mr Major must vigorously reinforce the hardening of his vote. I predict the Tories will poll around 39-40 per cent; Labour around 35 per cent, and the Liberal Democrats about 23.5 per cent. This should give Mr Major an overall majority of between 25 and 50.

There have been 23 general elections in Britain this century.

...and moreover

### ALAN COREN

**W**ell, I shall be all right tomorrow, shan't I? I shall know where I stand, even as I am standing where I shall be standing because I shall know where everything else stands, too, as the result of a little bleep, and as soon as that little bleep, I shall cast my vote. Everyone else standing in Dersingham Road polling station will also hear the little bleep, but it will mean nothing to them, because they will be standing in secret serried ranks in the beseiged votebattery, unable to see what it is that is bleeping.

As a matter of fact, I may have a little difficulty in seeing it myself, because it will be attached to my belt by a clever detachable device, but since the device has so far proved to be cleverer than I am, viz it is on my belt as I write because I cannot detach it, I may have to take my belt off to see it before I vote, and if I have to do that, I may not get a vote at all. For if you were an election officer and you saw a torso concealed behind a half-curtain taking its belt off, and the leg of its trousers beginning to falter, you would feel yourself to be derelict of your sworn duty if you did not shout "Oy!" and send your boy outside to fetch a constable.

I see I shall have to explain about the bleeping thing, because I sense your mounting impatience, you are serious people with serious minds to make up and time running out, and you haven't got a bleeping

thing to help you. I have. It arrived on Tuesday morning, in two boxes, one containing the thing and the other the device for attaching the thing to your belt. There was also a letter from someone signing himself Mike, who lives at Mercury House, Brentside Executive Centre, Brentside. I would not normally give a second thought to a letter from somewhere called Brentside Executive Centre, but since Mike had also included a delivery note from someone signing herself Samantha, keen to tell me that she lived at Unit 2 of Brentside Executive Centre, I thought I had better read on, because you never know what it is that is bleeping.

But first, Mike's letter. It informs me that my interest in the general election has now reached fever pitch, and that I need to stay abreast of developments. To this end, he is enclosing a pre-programmed Mercury pager, which will bleep every time there is important election news, telling me to pull off my belt and look at its little screen to see what that news is. Mike has also enclosed a 32-page instruction booklet packed with fascinating stuff, including the thought-provoking information that the pager's memory has 1984 characters in it, and that it has an "Escalert" function whereby the bleep starts soft and siren up to a maximum volume "to announce reception of special messages, and to override the pager's vibration operation".

I could not discover anything

further about this vibrator operation, probably just as well, but all may be revealed if I get a "special message". Oddly, I haven't received one yet — I should have thought Prime minister's ear fills with egg would have quivered, but there you are — all I have received is a lot of stock exchange information and similar stuff hardly worth dropping your trousers for, and such newswashes as the one telling me there was less ozone over Europe than ever before, no electoral help at all, given that I cannot remember where our Natural Law Party candidate stands on this one. I think his plan was to get everyone to eat a factory, though that may have been his health policy.

But I have a graver problem. Mike (and indeed Samantha, if she'd care to meet me one evening in the Brentside Executive Wine-U-Like and discuss it over a Malibu or two), which is that I have absolutely no idea where Mercury Paging Ltd stands politically. Floating as I am, I could well be a sucker for an Escalert tomorrow morning telling me, as I have penally poised, that Neil Kinnock has been caught in flagrante with Imelda Marcos, or that John Major is a Kray triplet, or that Paddy Ashdown has just shot somebody's dog.

In short, how can I be sure of the impartiality of the information the page wants me to receive? Face it, brothers, anything with 1984 characters in it needs careful watching.

I could not discover anything

Peter Stothard on how a beat poet with a radical message gingers up the American presidential race

## Verse and worse in New York

the Vietnam war, or that having failed to flatter even Mr Wilson sufficiently for that, he once greeted him as "Prime Minister Pearson", the man who was running Canada at the time.

New York memories tend not to go back so far. Those who accuse Margaret Thatcher of being President Reagan's "brownie" companion had, quite reasonably, never heard of Tony Benn. The Brownies see their man as part of an international movement for change, stretching from Moscow to Los Angeles. If John Lennon were still alive, would he be out with Kinnock? I was asked, while Mr Ginsberg groaned about "Sarcoma Plutonium Oregon".

Democrats are fascinated by the prospect of a Labour government in Britain. It suggests that history is once more on their side. Few remember that Lyndon Johnson's chief interest in Harold Wilson was to flatter him into sending British troops to fight

every national institution except the trade unions. But my "Brownie" companions had, quite reasonably, never heard of Tony Benn. The Brownies see their man as part of an international movement for change, stretching from Moscow to Los Angeles. If John Lennon were still alive, would he be out with Kinnock? I was asked, while Mr Ginsberg groaned about "Sarcoma Plutonium Oregon".

Mr Ginsberg said that he rather liked Governor Clinton. Perhaps he felt guilty at exerting all his effort on behalf of his Californian neighbour and sometime fellow Ashram-visitor. The Clinton team has not, however, returned the message of goodwill. A campaign worker pointed me to *Howl*, the Ginsberg poem that won him a worldwide reputation in 1956. Line 16 talks of "halucinating Arkansas" — not the kind of omen Mr Clinton wished to invoke in the week when "not

inhaling" marijuana had already caused him quite enough trouble.

Governor Clinton's advisers are doubtful about whether there is any real connection between the voting cycles across the Atlantic. The more isolationist the voter here in New York, the more likely he or she is to believe in a hot band of radical air spreading across the globe. Traditional internationalists, including those in the White House, are much more sceptical.

The Clinton camp can, however, see the advantage in suggesting that Mr Kinnock (if he wins) is cut from the same cloth as its own 1992 champion. An early meeting is even on the cards. Governor Clinton may not believe in any connection between the rightward swing in America and that in Britain at the beginning of the 1980s, but there is every benefit in suggesting that there was. John Major and George Bush can easily be stereotyped as coming from the same old grey mould.

President Bush decided this week to set out his own radical agenda for America, offering a modest campaign finance reform and restrictions on how long congressmen can keep their seats on Capitol Hill. Up in the Oval Office he may be isolated from reality, but even there the smell of people's frustration and anger has seeped through. He has temporarily beaten back Patrick Buchanan, and Mr Brown is Governor Clinton's problem, but there is still the *hydras* new head to play. H. Ross Perot, the Texas billionaire who threatens to use \$100 million of his own money to run an independent presidential race in November.

The prospect of all that money is worrying to the White House. But it is far more worrying to the Clinton campaign. If Mr Perot does spend at that level, ignoring the legal limits set for those who want federal matching funds, President Bush will have no option but to follow. America's liberal Democrats could be left looking as poverty-stricken as Britain's Liberal Democrats. The old poet who currently symbolises the year of the outsider may soon be exchanged for an old banker.

## How the Queen picks her man

A hung parliament would pose unwelcome problems at the palace, explains Lord St John of Fawsley

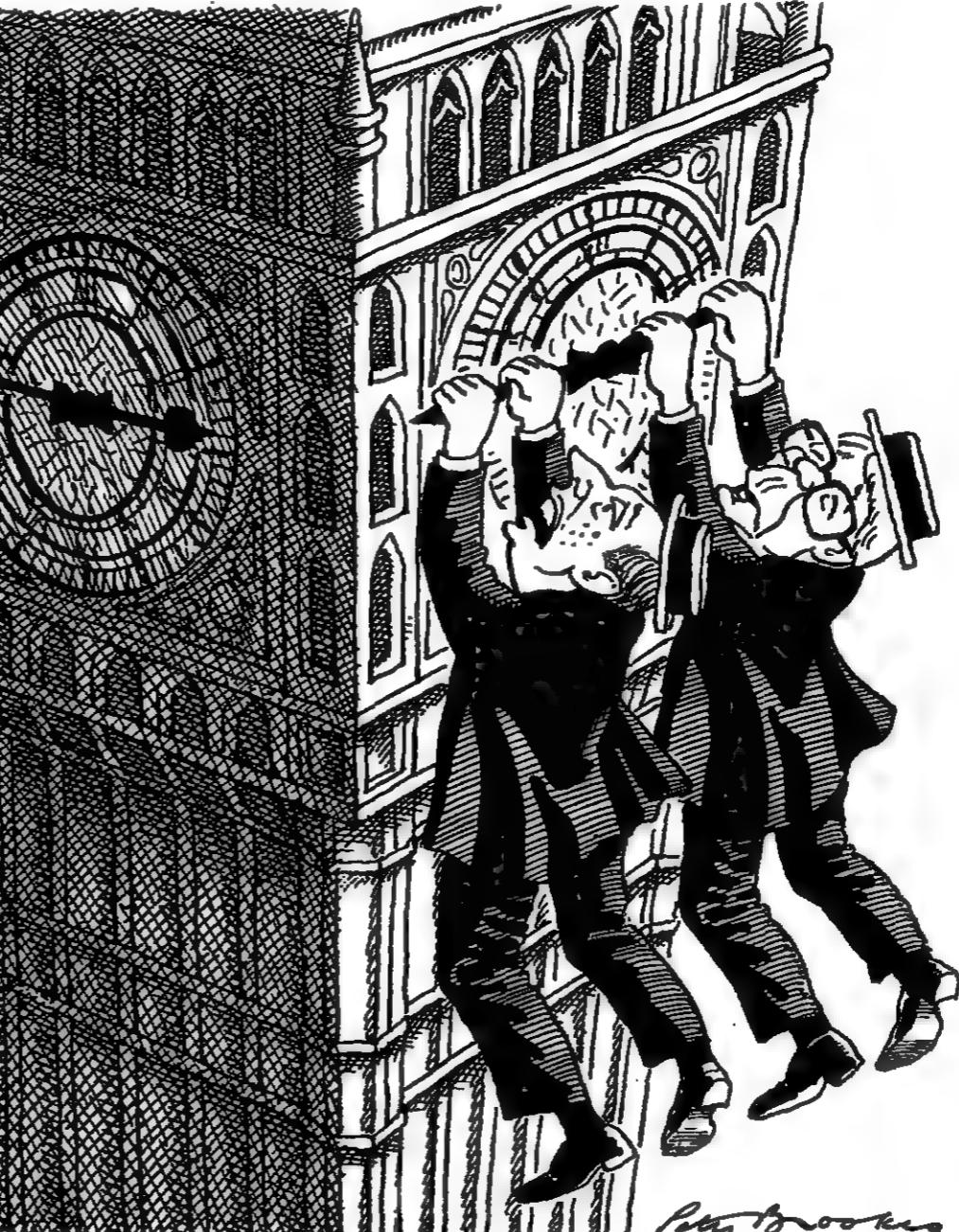
**D**espite the gyrations of the opinion polls, a hung parliament remains very much on the cards after the polling booths close tomorrow. What is likely to happen after that?

A coalition government is much the least likely outcome. The various parties are too far apart, and in any case, as Disraeli put it, "England does not love coalitions". The only true example this century has needed a world war to bring them about.

The process of forming a government starts with the Queen. She is guided by one golden rule:

Immigrant quota rules, reversing the Asylum Bill's screening of the 90 per cent bogus political refugee applications from the 45,000 applying annually, as well as allowing in the usual 50,000 a year from the new Commonwealth and elsewhere. (If Britain is as ghastly as Mr Kinnock says, why do so many want to come here?) Voters, of whatever ethnic origin, are terrified of changing our present peaceful balanced society into one torn by racial strife at least 150,000 new immigrants arrive each year. They know that in Germany and France, excessive immigration has led to the dramatic rise of extreme right-wing racist parties.

Today Mr Major must vigorously reinforce the hardening of his vote. I predict the Tories will poll around 39-40 per cent; Labour around 35 per cent, and the Liberal Democrats about 23.5 per cent. This should give Mr Major an overall majority of between 25 and 50.



in office, and after Sunningdale this was not forthcoming. When it became clear that his government would not survive a first vote in the Commons, he quite properly resigned. The Queen then sent for Harold Wilson to form a government.

In reaching this decision, the Queen knew that Mr Wilson had a reasonable chance of forming a

government which would last at least for a time. She must also have born in mind that he had emerged from the election as the leader of the party with the largest number of seats in Parliament; but the first consideration was constitutionally more significant than the second.

If tomorrow's election produces no clear verdict, the Conservative government suf-

fers a devastating loss of seats, then politically it might be a grave error. Effectively Mr Major would have lost the election and he could be seen as the head of a rejected administration desperately clinging to office. The most likely course for him to take in such circumstances is to resign.

The Queen would then almost certainly send for the Leader of the Opposition to form a new government, on the grounds that providing an alternative government is part of his duty, and that Mr Kinnock would be the man most likely to command the confidence of the Commons.

**W**here then would this leave Mr Ashdown and his demand for electoral reform as a price of parliamentary support? Almost certainly both would be left on the shelf. Neither of the other parties could agree to proportional representation *tout court*, and if either did it could not guarantee to deliver.

A major constitutional change of this kind could not be made without a further general election or at least a referendum. Negotiations on the matter would probably take so long that the kaleidoscope of politics would have been shaken up again by the time a conclusion had been reached. This happened after the election of 1929, when it took over two years for agreement to be reached on the alternate vote, and the government was then swept away in the economic storm of 1931, before it could be implemented.

One further major constitutional issue would arise from a hung parliament. Does the Queen have a right to refuse a dissolution of Parliament to an incumbent prime minister, or must she automatically grant the request? In constitutional form, the prime minister does not advise a dissolution of Parliament, but requests one. A theoretical right to refuse undoubtedly resides in the Crown, but it has not been exercised this century. A refusal in practice could expose the monarch to great dangers of seeming to be politically partisan. I cannot conceive that the Queen would be tempted to follow this course, and no one who has the welfare of our monarchical constitution at heart would be likely to try to persuade her to do so.

But these larger pie. The answer is whether cosmetic or structural changes are now possible, which the various administrations suggest. He protests virtually all festo, not because he is because he is exonerated for whom words must

**M**ost people just afford economic growth if the Tories hold to the water will have but Mr Kinnock Cook at Bryan Gour Prentiss at man. If Mr Kinnock has public sector that surpasses

What is implicit as the prime minister of trouble? incident in that he was Kinnock might these same people have given a campaign. It public sector conditions of have forced a pledge as much Labour's bar sponsored Mr Will they give on public. Mr private sector

Mr Kinnock such question. He is a deep more so by years. His origin, more Harold Wilson allied to an edges harder. Tory government

### Initial reactions

**J**OHN MAJOR may have have ruled out a deal with the Liberal Democrats, but he has had a go-between in Ulster wooing the Unionists for almost the entire campaign. He is Jonathan Caine — special adviser to Peter Brooke, the Northern Ireland secretary — and his report on how to do a deal with the Ulster Unionists will land on John Major's desk tomorrow.

While Brooke has spent only three days in the province, Caine has stayed there throughout, ensuring that the Unionists' MPs are in amenable mood should their support be needed to keep a Tory government in power.

Caine was appointed in December, the first political appointment at the Northern Ireland Office since 1985. Senior Conservatives denied that he had been given the job to lead a charm offensive, but he has worked assiduously ever since at rebuilding bridges with the Unionists and has close personal relationships with many of them, including James Molyneaux, leader of the Ulster Unionist party.

This week Caine returned to Central Office to prepare a detailed report on how to get the Unionists on board. By Friday it could be the most vital weapon in the Tories' armoury if they are still clinging to power.

"I have known Jim Molyneaux for some years. We get on well," says Caine. He seems already to have enjoyed considerable success. The Ulster Unionist leader has been spotted sporting a badge, produced in Central Office, proudly proclaiming "JM for PM". Whether the initials stand for John Major or James Molyneaux, he isn't saying.

at the price, and you get John Major thrown in as well," says a spokeswoman. Yet Paddy Ashdown's campaign seems to have offered the best value of all. He has not only covered the most miles, but comes in as the cheapest: just £4,500 for some of the most frenetic campaigning ever seen at a British election.

### Freshwater hope

**A** NEWLY discovered photograph of Tennyson may hold the key to saving a historic house on the Isle of Wight from the developers. The print, together with another of Carlyle, has been found in an album of pictures taken by the poet laureate's friend Julia Margaret Cameron. It bears the inscription "To Nellie Mundy with much love", which fixed both the Cameron Trust and the Isle of

Wight county council, owner of the photographs. However, Tennyson's published letters include one dated October 1849 to an Elizabeth Susan Mundy, which may lead to further discoveries of valuable photographs. The last works by Cameron to be sold went to a Japanese buyer for \$5 million.

The sale of Julia Margaret's photos may be the only way to save

the house," says Hugh Noyes, son of the poet Alfred Noyes and a trustee of the Cameron Trust. The county council, however, regards the photos as more important than her former home at Freshwater, where Tennyson was a frequent caller. The photos are not for sale, they insist. The campaign to save the house is still far short of the necessary £300,000. The bulldozers are almost at the gates.

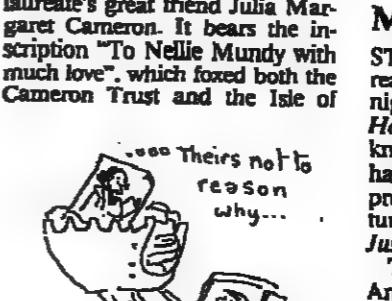
● **Adverts have gone up for Britain's biggest ever pet show at Earls Court next month. Take the family, but on no account take the man's best friend. "No pets admitted", the advert declares.**

### Mowgli's mogul

**S**TEVEN SPIELBERG had two reasons for being in London last night. As well as the premiere of *Hook*, he was meeting two unknown British writers, whom he has signed up to work on his next project, a full length animated feature film of an obscure musical, *Just So*.

The writers, George Stiles and Anthony Drew, both aged 30, have worked together since they were at Exeter University, and will shortly fly to Los Angeles to work with Spielberg. They will be accompanied by Cameron Mackintosh, who put up £100,000 when their musical, based on four of Kipling's *Just So* stories, was first staged at a fringe theatre two years ago. The production was not a huge success, and a planned transfer to the West End never happened. But two of Spielberg's producers were impressed and suggested the project to their boss.

Stiles and Drew will fly to Hollywood fresh from the somes of Buxton, where they have just finished performing some of the songs from *Just So*.



Wight county council, owner of the photographs. However, Tennyson's published letters include one dated October 1849 to an Elizabeth Susan Mundy, which may lead to further discoveries of valuable photographs. The last works by Cameron to be sold went to a Japanese buyer for \$5 million.

The sale of Julia Margaret's photos may be the only way to save



## MAJOR'S FIRST TEST

The 1992 election is now too close to call. Evidence that Labour and the Conservatives are running neck and neck has raised the possibility of a hung parliament and given a prominence to the Liberal Democrats that belies their poll rating, which remains below 1983 and 1987.

The prospect of a hung parliament is not a result of the electorate wishing to see neither of the two main parties in power. In that case, the Liberal Democrats would win a majority of popular votes and doubtless form a government. A hung parliament is in prospect because support for the two main parties appears equally divided, a wholly different matter. Those who truly want Paddy Ashdown to decide for them whether John Major or Neil Kinnock should be prime minister can vote for Mr Ashdown. Everybody else should choose for themselves by voting Labour or Conservative.

The case for Labour is stronger than it has been at any time this decade. The party Mr Kinnock inherited from Lord Callaghan and Michael Foot was a wretched thing. Its leadership had split. It was sustained by a determination on the part of the big unions that it should not be superseded by the Liberals and Social Democrats. That determination was harnessed by Mr Kinnock in 1985 and a solid compact was formed: the unions and the party conference took a diminished role in the counsels of the party. In return Mr Kinnock would deliver an electable Labour team, new image, new faces, new policies, no questions asked.

Mr Kinnock has delivered, establishing himself as one of Labour's more remarkable political managers. He has done so at no small cost to his own credibility. Unilateral nuclear disarmament has been jettisoned, some would say just when some of its tenets have become plausible. Anti-Europeanism was also abandoned. Labour has dropped the union protectionism it once promised; indeed its spokesmen vie with each other in their machismo towards the unions. Nationalisation has disappeared from the manifesto. The shadow Chancellor, John Smith, has clothed his plans in unprecedented fiscal respectability, to the point of promising to raise taxes in the trough of recession. Even the commitment to economic and social planning, core of Labour's corporatism in the 1960s and 1970s, has been reduced to the oddity of a "national assessment".

In addition, Labour has responded to some of the grosser mistakes of the Thatcher years with policies that could revive some of the democratic life of the nation. The party's commitment to local and regional government, while vulnerable to its congenital disease of bureaucracy, is well-founded. So too is its desire to return to the true accountability of an uncapped local property tax (which should include business rates). Its policy on devolution is sound. Its proposals to reform the constitution in matters of freedom of information and human rights reflect a proper desire for consensus. Nothing alienated Tory support in the country more than Margaret Thatcher's confrontationalism in pursuit of her more radical reforms, not least the misguided ones in local government.

But these are all cherries picked from a larger pie. The question that Labour must answer is whether Mr Kinnock's new look is cosmetic or real, whether the party's structures are now robust against the pressures to which the Wilson and Callaghan administrations succumbed. Mr Kinnock will of course tell the electorate to try him and see. He protests that he has changed his mind on virtually all substantive items of his manifesto, not because politicians tell him to but because he has genuinely changed his mind. To those former colleagues whom he excoriated for believing what he now believes and whom he drove into the wilderness, such words must sound unconvincing.

Mr Kinnock's spending plans are legion. The Times' own calculations estimate that these plans are just affordable, assuming a steady rate of economic growth from today's low point. But if the Tories have found it near impossible to hold to their spending plans, how much harder will it be for Labour? A vast head of water has built up behind the Treasury dam. Mr Kinnock's spending ministers — Robin Cook at health, Jack Straw at education, Bryan Gould at local government, John Prescott at transport — are dam-busters to a man. If Labour really intends, as Mr Kinnock has said, to appropriate to the public sector the surplus of economic growth, that surplus will swiftly evaporate.

What is important here is not so much the explicit as the implicit. To what haven does a prime minister under pressure return in time of trouble? Lord Callaghan, in a famous incident in 1979, professed to the unions that he was "prostrate before you". Mr Kinnock might put it differently, but it will be these same public-sector unions to whom he has given gratuitous comfort during this campaign. It is they who want to return the public sector substantially to the terms and conditions obtaining in the 1970s, and who have forced Mr Kinnock's dam-busters to pledge as much. It is they who are strong on Labour's backbenches. It is they who sponsored Mr Kinnock's new model party. Will they give in first, or will the strain be felt on public borrowing, interest rates, the private sector and growth?

Mr Kinnock has no plausible answers to such questions. He smiles and says, trust me. He is a deeply conservative politician, made more so by the trimmings of the past five years. His vision is no longer Marxist in origin, more akin to that pronounced by Harold Wilson in 1963, a vague modernism allied to an equally vague egalitarianism, its edges hardened only in contrast to a tired Tory government. He would be a prisoner of his civil servants, a prisoner having to

## Party politics and the case for PR

From Professor Emeritus

Ivor Gowar

Sir, Mr Heath is right to call for a parliamentary enquiry into the electoral system (report, April 4, later editions). I do not believe that most Conservatives reject the idea of proportional representation: on the contrary, they are only too conscious of the unfairness and inadequacy of our existing arrangements. Government by consent is generally held to be one of the main prerequisites of democracy, and we have manifestly not been getting this for many decades.

Yours faithfully,  
IVOR GOWAR,  
17 Wychnor Paddocks,  
Charbury, Oxford.

From Mr David Faull

Sir, "Blackmail" is the word you use in your leading article of April 6 to describe Paddy Ashdown's insistence on a promise of proportional representation before deciding which of the main parties he would choose to make his post-election partner. It is an ugly word. It would surely be better applied to the Tories for threatening us with a socialist government if we do not vote for them while maintaining a voting system which they believe gives the electorate only that limited choice.

Yours faithfully,  
DAVID FAULL,  
Sedgemoor House, Church Lane,  
Westonzoyland, Somerset.

From Mr Michael S. Moss

Sir, "Cold calling" as a means of selling fitted kitchens and double glazing is bad enough; but to be cold-called, as I was last night, by a political party quoting one of its own surveys in order to encourage tactical voting debases the whole democratic process. The Liberal Democrats should know better.

Yours sincerely,  
MICHAEL S. MOSS,  
6 Kirklee Gardens, Glasgow.  
April 7.

From Mr Chris August

Sir, Election campaigning has been full of discussion about electoral reform. I agree that proportional representation should be closely examined and not introduced as part of a deal between parties; but why is it that none of the politicians have suggested that such a fundamental change in election procedures should as a first step be decided by the electorate in a referendum?

Yours faithfully,  
CHRIS AUGUST,  
8 Trevian Road, W14.

From Mrs Patricia M. Roberts

Sir, What would proportional representation lead to but a hung parliament — in perpetuity?

Yours etc.,  
PATRICIA M. ROBERTS,  
12 Mansfield Terrace,  
Budleigh Salterton, Devon.

## Cost of restoration

From Lord Grantley

Sir, The interesting article by John Young on April 1 about the superb manor, Ightham Mote in Kent, invites certain comments by the owner of this house, Markenfield, equally moated and built in 1310 or 30 years earlier than Ightham Mote.

The structure of Markenfield is entirely limestone (other than a small amount of the crenellations restored about 1990, alas in sandstone) and is almost completely unaltered since its construction in 1310 apart from various inside alterations.

Mr Young reports that there is a restoration programme at Ightham Mote involving no less than £7,500,000. When I inform you that restoration of this house involved me in under 1 per cent of this amount including most helpful advice and improvement to the public services.

The Tory prospectus on the last is clear. It is to press on towards greater efficiency, tardily and painfully initiated in the health service. These moves are aimed partly at de facto or de jure privatisation, as with the prisons, the railways, some hospitals, some of the social services. Or they are aimed at using market mechanisms to improve internal incentives to give customers a better service.

The telltale of Labour's programme is the lack of awareness in its manifesto that anything was seriously wrong with the welfare state it bequeathed the Tories in 1979. Tory direction of public service can easily be criticised, but it has been set on the right course. To dismantle almost all of it, as Labour promises, would be inexcusable.

On managing recovery, Tory policy is equally simple: not to permit the overheating that occurred in 1988-9; not to impose excessive burdens on the private sector; to restrain public spending and to continue a policy of shifting the tax burden from taxes on income and savings to those on expenditure. There may be many a slip twixt cup and lip, but these are sensible policies requiring confident implementation. Labour rejects each one either in whole or part.

Integral to such rejection is the divergent approach of the two parties towards Europe. Labour appears to be committed to an extreme Delors position on European union, favouring the Maastricht social chapter, bigger regional and industrial subsidies and probably a single currency. Labour was fiercely opposed to the stand taken by Mr Major at Maastricht. Bluntly, Mr Kinnock would have signed anything Brussels put on the table. He maintains that the British economy will actually be strengthened by the various constraints of the social chapter and economic union, despite the growing doubts of other European states. Mr Kinnock has discovered in European corporatism a grander Jerusalem perhaps than Mr Smith will permit him to build within Britain. For his reactionary vision to guide the British presidency, and all of Europe, later this year is a grim prospect.

These policies, public sector management, the conduct of recovery and the approach to Europe, radically divide the two main parties. It is a divide of ideology and of collective interest rather than of individuals.

But John Major is on the right side of that divide. He has emerged during his brief reign as prime minister as a likeable, competent and honest leader of his country. He deserves to be given a first vote of confidence at tomorrow's election.

## 'Unloved' landmark

From Professor Gerald Dux

Sir, Could someone please point out to Craig Seton ("Bank offers to save unloved landmark", April 4) that the Ronunda building in Birmingham to which he refers is cylindrical not spherical.

Definition apart, there is surely something to be said for retaining a building which has "become a visual symbol of the city", even although it is no more like a "Coca Cola tin" than it is a sphere.

Yours truly,  
GERALD DIX,  
13 Friars Quay,  
Norwich.  
April 6.

## Off the rails

From Mr John McNally

Sir, Having spent a good deal of yesterday — Sunday — trying to return by train to London from the south coast, I now fully appreciate Mr Timothy West's letter (March 31) and can answer his question. BR refer to their mode of transport as a "service" rather than a train because for a large part of the journey it is not a train. It is a bus.

Yours sincerely,  
JOHN MCANALLY,  
32 Finborough Road, SW10.

April 6.

Business letters, page 25

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

### Pros and cons of devolution issue

From Mr A. C. B. Tidmarsh

Sir, As I understand it the proponents of an independent Scotland envisage that it should be a member of the EC. Since it is a condition of membership that member states should pay a proportion of VAT receipts to Brussels, it follows that Scotland would have to continue with this tax.

Unfortunately, in spite of the change to a single market at the end of the year, no one has yet been able to devise a system in which output tax paid in one country, say England, can be returned to an importer as input tax in another country, in this case Scotland.

It will therefore be necessary to institute the same VAT paperwork on all commercial transactions across the new frontier between England and Scotland, as is the case on the frontier between the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland. Since the economies of Scotland and England are far more closely integrated than those of any other European neighbours, these frontier posts will be the busiest in Europe.

Do Scots who seek independence, and I have considerable sympathy with this desire, realise that this formidable encumbrance to trade will arise?

Yours faithfully,  
TONY TIDMARSH,  
The White House, Dunley,  
Stourport-on-Severn,  
Worcestershire.  
April 5.

From Mr R. S. Allen

Sir, If this election results in a small Labour majority, it will be yet another case of a Conservative England bowing to the will of a Labour Celtic fringe. On this occasion that fringe will also provide a large proportion, if not the majority, of our new rulers.

Will about home rule for England?

Yours faithfully,  
RICHARD ALLEN,  
Hazel Rough, Hartfield, Sussex.  
April 6.

From Mr Brian Lynch

Sir, As a member of the United Kingdom for over 50 years (English branch), I hope that if Mr Kinnock offers a referendum on Scottish/Welsh devolution, and its consequences, we will all have a vote in it — if he gets the chance to, that is.

Yours etc.,  
BRIAN LYNCH,  
3 Marborough Road,  
Brentwood, Essex.

From Mr Michael Grosvenor Myer

Sir, You say in your leader (April 6) on the Elgin Marbles: "If by freak of history the Stone of Scone was held abroad the Scots would rightly assert a claim." Well, it is: it's in England.

Yours truly,  
MICHAEL GROSVENOR MYER,  
34 West End,  
Haddenham, Cambridge.  
April 6.

### Brontë death theory

From Professor Emeritus P. Rhodes

Sir, Although the American gynaecologist, Professor Gerson Weiss, may believe that Charlotte Brontë died not from *hyperemesis gravidarum* (morning sickness) but from Addison's disease (report, March 31), Mrs Gaskell records that "Martha... tried to cheer her with the thought of the baby that was coming". That seems conclusive enough for women, even of last century, knew about early symptoms in pregnancy, especially the absence of menstruation and breast signs.

Obviously the hypothesis of Addison's disease cannot be ruled out, but that of pregnancy sickness seems still to be the more likely.

Yours sincerely,  
PHILIP RHOADES,  
1 Wakerley Court, Wakerley,  
Oakham, Leicestershire.

I knew the family intimately from 1929 until the end and see the broadcast as an utter travesty of their relationship. Leavis was incomparably the greatest teacher who ever came my way.

Yours truly,  
RAYMOND O'MALLEY,  
23 Nightingale Avenue, Cambridge.  
March 30.

From Mr Graham Chainey

Sir, The title of the BBC film about F. R. Leavis and "O", *The Last Romantics* invites the question just how many last romantics there have been.

According to the title of his authorised biography (1948) Sir John Martin-Harvey was *The Last Romantic*. So, according to their own biographers, were Max Eastman (1978) and Queen Marie of Romania (1985). A television film in 1985 was called *Vladimir Horowitz: The Last Romantic*, while *The Last Romantics* is the title of a novel by Caroline Seabohm set in 1960s Oxford; not to mention W. B. Yeats. And you illustrated (*Life & Times*, March 31) the Barbican Gallery's 1989 exhibition, "The Last Romantics".

Sceptically yours,  
GRAHAM CHAINAY,  
17 Marine Parade,  
Brighton, East Sussex.

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071) 782 5046.

### Justice abroad not seen to be done

From Mr E. W. Smith

Sir, I was distressed by the letter from the Foreign Office minister, Mr Mark Lennox-Boyd (March 28), attacking Mr Stephen Jakobi who had written to you (March 26) in his capacity as spokesman for Fair Trials Abroad.

Mr Jakobi is probably best known to the public as being the solicitor to my daughter, Karyn Smith, arrested with Patricia Cahill on a drugs charge in Bangkok, 21 months ago. Karyn is at present in prison in Thailand, and though the European Parliament has expressed "deep concern" that she was "wrongly convicted", it took a public outcry to get her any government support (reports, May 22, September 12, October 23, November 18 and 21, 1991).

Mr Lennox-Boyd argues that no representation can be made until the possibility of appeals has been exhausted and that this does not apply to any of the cases in which Mr Jakobi had "so far shown an interest". My daughter abandoned her appeal nearly a year ago. This single fact makes Mr Jakobi's point.

Yours faithfully,  
E. W. SMITH,  
46 Foredove Lane,  
Dansey Wood,  
Solihull, West Midlands.  
March 28.

From Mrs Frances M. Benn

Sir, On March 4, 1991, my son Christopher, an airline pilot, was arrested on a charge of rape, having been tricked off his British aircraft in Toulouse. He was told that there was an urgent telephone call for him: when he stepped off the plane, he was arrested, handcuffed and taken off to Martinique under the most humiliating circumstances.

Christopher was put in jail for five weeks with a condemned murderer. No help was forthcoming for legal aid. Although not a wealthy woman myself, I was forced to find £35,000 in French francs to get him released on bail. The charge made against him has since been dropped, and he is now being held on a charge of "force and surprise".

My son had nothing but praise for the honorary consul in Martinique in the period immediately following his arrest; nor do I believe (as Mr Lennox-Boyd suggests) is Mr Jakobi's belief that the government should intervene "at whim" in other countries' legal procedures. However, I do believe that members of the EC should conform to international procedures with regard to extradition.

Christopher was arrested off British territory, by trickery. He is no fugitive from justice — he would have gone willingly to Martinique to clear his name — and his extradition from Britain could and should have been effected by the use of established procedures.

Why did the Foreign Office allow those procedures to go by default? Why did it not challenge the lawfulness of his arrest?

Yours faithfully,  
FRANCES BENN,  
Meadswood, Loddon Drive,  
Wargrave, Reading, Berkshire.  
March 30.

### Twilight zone

From Mr Raymond O'Malley

S



## OBITUARIES

## JACK ADIE

Jack Jesson Adie, CMG, former colonial administrator in Zanzibar and Kenya, died on March 27 aged 78. He was born on May 1, 1913.

JACK Adie was a leading member of the colonial administration in Kenya in the period preceding independence in December 1963. During the 12 years that he spent there, which covered those of the Mau Mau emergency in the 1950s, he served in almost every government department, ending up as permanent secretary for labour.

He first went there in 1951 and after filling several posts in the departments for education, labour and lands, left Africa in 1957 to become the chief secretary in Barbados. On the formation of the short-lived West Indian Federation in the following year, however, he returned to Kenya as permanent secretary for forest development, game and fisheries.

This was at a time when people throughout the West as well as in Africa were starting to appreciate the threat to wild life caused by indiscriminate killing and intensive farming. Adie found himself in the forefront of this movement, partly responsible for husbanding Kenya's rich animal resources, and in later years he came to regard this period as the most rewarding of his time there.

His Kenyan experience, however, represented only the second half of his career.

Most of the first half, between 1938 and 1948, was spent in Zanzibar where his posts included those of private secretary to the Sultan and to the British resident. He was awarded the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar 4th class before he left.

This period also included



military service during the war as a private in the Kenya regiment, then as a subaltern in the King's African Rifles. For part of the time he was on secondment in Ethiopia, where he served as personal assistant to the Emperor Haile Selassie's military/political adviser.

Although he spent most of his career in East Africa, Jack Adie came from the heartland of England, near Birmingham, where his family owned a well-established and nationally reputed firm of silversmiths. The company eventually closed in the early 1950s, one of its last commissions being a commemorative salver for the Queen on her accession to the throne in 1952.

Adie went to Shrewsbury School, then Magdalen College, Oxford, where he took a degree in mods and English literature. He also won a tennis blue, played five for the university and was awarded his tennis colours for Warwickshire. He entered the colonial service after taking a first class pass in the administrative civil service course.

After leaving Kenya in 1964 he was attached for five years to the Ministry of Overseas Development in London before finally retiring in 1969. He and his wife then became "sixpenny settlers" in Malta, joining a large number of other returning British expatriates who were tempted to the island by an income tax concession of sixpence in the pound. Adie returned to Britain in the late 1970s shortly after the death of his wife.

While in Zanzibar he wrote a number of monographs, copies of which are now kept in the country's national museum. They included one on bull-fighting in East Africa, another on the Zanzibar national anthem and a third on the traditional, brass-decorated Arab doors. The last of these has been incorporated in the Zanzibar official guide.

On returning from Malta as a widower in Britain, however, he embarked on a self-appointed task which almost created its own lifestyle. Always a lover of sport, he set himself the target of seeing 600 different operatic works. His quest took him on a musical odyssey throughout the world, to Australasia, as well as all over Europe and North America. He made it though. He had seen 601 by the time he died.

Jack Adie is survived by two daughters and a son.

weight and middleweight titles at various times during the 1930s.

Van Klaveren was a fighter in the old style, aggressive and hard punching, continually moving forward and relying chiefly on his footwork rather than his hands for defence.

He toured extensively in the United States and Australia in the 1930s and 1940s, but he was never granted the world championship challenge he so obviously merited by American boxing authorities.

He finally retired from the ring at the age of 48, after losing a European championship challenge to Idriss Dionne, a French fighter half his age.

## Supper

Fraco-British Society. The annual meeting and supper of the Franco-British Society was held last night at the RAF Club. The Marquess of Lansdowne, president, was in the chair and presented the Enid McLeod literary prize to Mr Frank Giles and the Landscape Gardening award to Mme Marie-Louise Hemphill, Presidente-Fondatrice of Les Amis du Jardin Shakespeare. Paris. M Michel Luminat, Culinary Counsellor at the French Embassy, was the guest speaker and Sir Reginald Hibbert, chairman of the society, also spoke.

## Birthdays today

Mr Hywel Bennett, actor, 48; General Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley, 68; Mr J. P. Kavanagh, racehorse trainer, 49; Sir Neil Lawson, former High Court judge, 84; Air Commandant Dame Alice Lowrey, former matron-in-chief, PMRAFNS, 87; Mrs Mary Moore, former principal, St Hilda's College, Oxford, 62; Mr W. Garth Morrison, chief scout, 49; Mr Eric Porter, actor, 64; Mr Ian Smith, former Prime Minister of Rhodesia, 73; Professor Maurice Stacey, chemist, 85; Sir Thomas Thomson, chairman, Greater Glasgow Health Board, 69; Miss Dorothy Tuin, actress, 61.

## Luncheon

First Day Cover Club. Mr Cliff Morgan was the guest of honour at a luncheon of the First Day Cover Club held yesterday at the RAF Club to mark the issue of the Europa '92 stamps, including a special stamp honouring the British Paralympics team. Mr Keith McDowell presided. Among those present were: Mr Colin Penson, Mr Anthony Weare, Mr Alan Tuffit, Mr Alan Johnson, Mr David Evans, Mr Alan Clark, Mrs Clare Reid and Mr Darryl McEwan.

Samuel Moore Walton, reputedly the richest man in America and certainly the most successful merchant of his time, died at the University of Arkansas Medical Sciences Hospital in Little Rock on April 5 aged 74. He was born on March 29, 1918, in Kingfisher, Oklahoma.

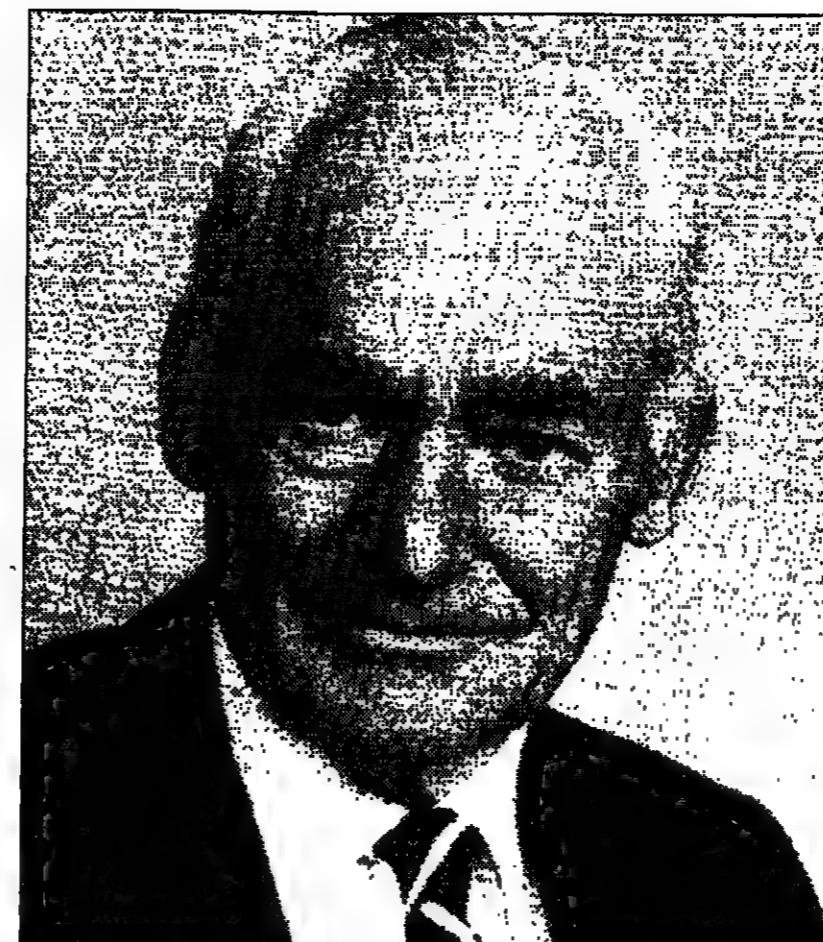
THE secret of Sam Walton's success was simple: he had a talent for inspiring his employees to serve their customers. A gifted, homespun orator, he made personal visits to dozens of his Wal-Mart stores each week, preaching the same message: help customers, cut costs and share the profits. The technique built his empire from a single shop in Arkansas in 1962 to a current chain of 1,752 stores in 42 states with annual sales of \$44 billion and profits last year of \$1.6 billion.

Walton was named by *Forbes Magazine* as the wealthiest person in America in 1985. He hated the distinction, saying: "All that hubbub about someone's net worth is just stupid, and it's made my life a lot more complex and difficult." But America's worship of the dollar made it impossible for him to escape the awe and adulation, and his wealth was certainly remarkable. Divided among five family trusts, it is currently valued at \$23 billion in Wal-Mart stock alone, drawing annual dividends of \$93.5 million.

Sam Walton grew up in Missouri, where he was an Eagle Scout, quarterback of the state champion football team and president of the student council at his high school. He worked his way through the University of Missouri, delivering newspapers and waiting at a table while earning a degree in economics, then served as an army captain during the second world war.

He opened his first shop in 1945 with the aid of a \$25,000 loan from his father-in-law. It was part of a cut-price franchise chain. Walton worked with the chain until 1962, then branched out on his own in the belief that the way ahead lay in under-served rural areas. The idea proved phenomenally successful, largely because of Walton's personal touch and organisational ability, and his willingness — rare among American businessmen — to share his success with his employees. He established profit-sharing plans which enabled low-paid workers to retire with comfortable and even lucrative pensions. Wal-Mart went public in 1970, and

## SAM WALTON



the stock soared as Wall Street noted an unbroken pattern of high profits and fast growth. From 1981 to 1991 the shares produced an average annual return of 46.8 per cent, and an investment of \$3,000 in 1981 is today worth \$170,000. Last year the chain passed Sears Roebuck and Co to become America's largest retailer, serving its stores from 19 cavernous distribution centres, each with six miles of rack space, 2,000 trucks and a fleet of aircraft.

Until recent months, when he finally succumbed to a long-running battle with hairy-cell leukaemia and multiple myeloma, Walton continued to fly his own twin-engined aircraft from town to town, often visiting as many as six of his stores in a single day. He was far from being a remote tycoon. In 1983, after Wal-Mart's profits exceeded expectations, he

kept a promise to his employees by putting on a grass skirt and hula in the middle of Wall Street.

Walton surrendered active control of the company to a team of hand-picked senior executives in 1988, though he remained chairman until his death. Financial experts do not expect his loss to affect the continued success of Wal-Mart, which Walton had planned to have sales exceeding \$100 billion by the turn of the century.

Last month Walton was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, America's highest civilian honour. He was commended as "an American original, embodying the entrepreneurial spirit and epitomising the American dream."

He is survived by his wife, three sons and a daughter.

## KARL TUNBERG



Karl Tunberg, Hollywood screenwriter, died in Putney on April 4 aged 83. He was born in Spokane, Washington, on March 11, 1909.

KARL Tunberg was a true Hollywood professional. Whatever the star, whatever the genre, Tunberg would deliver the appropriate goods: airy musical comedy for *Down Argentine Way* (1940), historical nectars for *Beau Brummell* (1954), Mongol tough talk for *Tarzan of the Apes* (1962). He first worked in Hollywood in 1937 and over the space of three decades put words into the mouths of Betty Grable, Alice Faye, Glenn Miller, Sonja Henie, Mario Lanza, Robert Taylor, Charlton Heston, Yul Brynner and Doris Day.

MGM's prestigious remake of *Ben Hur*, released in 1959, gave him the chance to work on something more substantial than light entertainment, though the chariot race had a stronger grip on the memory than the dialogue.

His contribution fuelled a controversy. Although Tunberg readily agreed to share the writing credit with Fry, the Screen Writers Guild had served as president adjudged

about an aristocratic Jew's troubles during the time of Christ. Distinguished writers like Maxwell Anderson, Gore Vidal and especially, Christopher Fry were drafted to iron out colloquial phrases and buff the lines with literary polish: "Did you enjoy your dinner?", for instance, became in Fry's hands, "Was the food to your liking?"

Otherwise, Tunberg's career proved busy but uneventful. He went to Hollywood after teaching experience, berthing first at Twentieth Century Fox.

Glossy musicals were an early speciality: along with *Down Argentine Way* (1940), with Betty Grable and Carmen Miranda warbling away, he

worked on *My Gal Sal* (1942) and *Orchestra Wives* (1942). At Paramount, a few years later, he produced several of his own scripts: *Kirby* (1945), with Paulette Goddard and Ray Milland, directed by Mitchell Leisen; a succulently staged drama about a gunsmith-turned-duchess in Gainsborough's London, was much admired and considered quite ripe in its day. Then MGM and *Ben Hur* beckoned.

Tunberg had held the Screen Writers Guild's presidency in 1951: a difficult year. The House Un-American Activities Committee, dedicated to communism's eradication, was burrowing feverishly into Hollywood writers' private lives. To safeguard the guild's status and forestall further enquiries, Tunberg, an apolitical liberal, was authorised by the guild's board to provide committee investigators with all records of union meetings. Writers who appeared as "unfriendly" witnesses did so without the guild's guidance.

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In the 1960s, Tunberg's output dwindled, mirroring the collapse of the Hollywood studio system. He worked on several British films, including an unbundled melodrama, *I Thank a Fool* (1962), and *The Seventh Dawn* (1964), a romantic farce, directed by Lewis Gilbert, into the Malayan jungles. Eventually he settled in London.

For MGM's *Where Were You When the Lights Went Out?*, with Doris Day and Terry Thomas, did not quite live up to the promise of its title and remained stage-bound. Among his last American films was *How Do I Love Thee?* (1970), a sentimental comedy with Jackie Gleason and Maureen O'Hara.

## Latest wills

Dame Gwen Pfrongse-Davies, the classical actress who frequently appeared with Sir John Gielgud, left £116,124. She left just under £80,000 to personal beneficiaries and the remainder to charity and other groups. She died in January aged 101.

Jean Eleanor Batters, of Eastbourne, East Sussex, left estate valued at £708,169 net. She left personal legacies of £25,000, all her pictures to the Town Art Gallery, Eastbourne, and the residue to the Actors'Charitable Trust.

Mrs Violet Marion Kea, of Broadway, Hereford and Worcester, left estate valued at £2,109,394 net.

Mrs Elizabeth Agnes Mary Weld, of Lubworth Manor, Wareham, Dorset, wife of Sir Joseph Weld, former Lord Lieutenant of Dorset and chair-

man of Wessex regional health authority, left estate valued at £434,952 net.

Other estates include (net, before tax paid):

Mr Francis Albert James Vincent, of Tonnes, Devon, £1,142,105.

Mrs Phyllis Mary Woolfenden, of Hove, East Sussex, £1,420,188.

Mr John Edwin Branton, of Chippenham, Wiltshire, £1,167,938.

Mr Stephen Cannon, of Hampstead, £1,492,527.

Mrs Marian Jackson, of Weston Underwood, Buckinghamshire, £1,197,643.

Mr Eric Alfred Brunn, of Kensington, £1,188,538.

Mr Peter Richard Hager, of Bayswater, £1,244,651.

Mrs Josephine Naomi Pears, of Regent's Park, £1,457,121.

Controversy has again arisen among motorists as to the advisability of switching off powerful headlights when meeting other motor vehicles with similar lighting equipment. So long ago as 1909 the question of danger from dazzling headlamps was receiving the attention of the Royal Automobile Club, and experiments were made with the various devices to see if the trouble caused by glaring lights could be remedied. These early devices were crude in character and did not come into effective use. Since the war the number of cars on the roads has greatly increased and the dazzling difficulty has become more acute. It seemed likely in 1923 that the Ministry of Transport would take action, but experts like Lord Montagu of Beaufort urged that the Department and the automobile bodies who had the matter in hand should not legislate in a hurry, and the decision of motorists is still unrestricted by regulations.

Meanwhile, motorists are troubled by the confusion created as the result of conflicting views as to whether lights should be kept on or shut off when cars are about to meet in the dark. The majority of drivers have now adopted the conclusion of the committee of the Royal Automobile Club that switching off headlights when passing other vehicles with powerful lamps is a dangerous practice. The chief drawback to a sudden diminution of illumination of the road is that drivers are unable to adapt themselves immediately to the change of lighting. This leads to a risk of losing, momentarily, a correct sense of direction, and also of running pedestrians or cyclists.

The question of "dazzle" is only one of a number concerned with lighting as it affects the motorist. Car owners are asking, for instance, for improvements of street lighting, and the Rev E. H. Fryer, head of the Road Department of the Automobile Association, has urged that there is need of a national standard of lighting.

As the position stands at present the Ministry of Transport is contemplating the introduction of a "dazzle"禁令, possibly during this session of a Road Vehicles Bill, and in this the Minister may seek to obtain powers to issue regulations in respect of the more powerful kind of headlights.

Taking powers is one thing,

## APPRECIATIONS

## Prince George Galitzine

GEORGE Galitzine (obituary, April 2) was a romantic figure whose love of Russia almost transcended that of his adopted country. Increasingly he was to spend more and more time amongst the splendours of his family's past, a dispossessed nobleman playing the grand dragoman (under the watchful eye of the KGB) to successive waves of English tourists. His usual stance, as many who accompanied him will recall, was at the back of the party explaining to his devotees what the tourist guide was saying was total rubbish! And then giving his own version laced with family anecdotes.

I first knew George when I was a schoolboy and he a White Russian refugee, his family having lost everything in the Revolution. Years later on a magical night in June I remember George sitting with my wife and me in the garden facing the Michael Palace in St Petersburg (or Leningrad then) talking deep into the night about the old days; how his family acquired this palace; the cause and meaning of the Revolution; and emergent "Perestroika". And then a visit to the forbidden Palace of Oranienbaum (supposed to be occupied by "research chemists"), which had been his mother's former home.

On an impulse George makes off towards the grandiose garden stairs ascending in sweeping flights to the front of the palace. A lone figure in this phantasmagoria of architecture. He ranted



a glass door in an attempt to open it and see what is going on inside. All he sees is a man in a white coat, confirming his worst fears. He then told us the story of his mother's former ladies' maid, who suddenly turned up in England in 1935, the family having left in 1915 when his father, Prince Vladimir, joined his regiment at the Front. "Oh, yes, milady," she remarked. "I was at Oranienbaum not so long ago, and your dresses are still hanging up in the cupboard where you left them."

George's sad death will be another link gone with this long-forgotten world.

Sir Carol Mather

YOUR obituary of Prince George Galitzine prompted me to look out my copy of the July 1934 school photograph of St Paul's, in which Galitzine — and another boy called Charlton — appeared twice, at each end, having sprinted round the back and beaten the clockwork pan-

oramic camera.

Hubert Darke

produced a pair of whale bones, fastened at one end with insulating tape, and proceeded to survey the area.

Sensing a sceptic, he invited me to walk alongside his Ciroon, my forearms held in tension by the forked whale bones. I was unable to prevent the violent swing of the device as I walked past the engine. Rocard explained his



THE TIMES  
BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY APRIL 8 1992

BUSINESS EDITOR JOHN BELL

STEPHEN MARKSON

Stores chief campaigns against rises

## Tesco to fight banks' plastic card charges

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH AND NEIL BENNETT

TODAY IN BUSINESS  
TAX BLUES

Richard Jeffrey argues that Labour's tax proposals would hit the families with crippling mortgages, who are critical to Britain's housing market.

Page 25

## MORE BOOKS

St Ives, the printer, believes Labour would spend more on education, and it hopes to print the extra textbooks.

Tempus, page 22

## WELL DRESSED

## NEXT

Next, the retail group that collapsed after aggressive expansion, is making a profit and has resumed dividend payments.

Page 23

## GOOD RETURNS

A development bank run by civil servants has made £4 million profit on £2 million investment in Hong Kong.

Page 23

## POWER BASE

PowerGen, the electricity generator, plans to negotiate pay deals with all unions at the same time instead of in three batches.

Page 23

## THE POUND

US dollar 1.7463 (-0.0049)  
German mark 2.8433 (+0.0072)  
Exchange Index 90.1 (+0.1)  
Bank of England official close (4pm)

## STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share 1865.3 (+6.1)  
FT-SE 100 2404.2 (+3.3)  
New York Dow Jones 3270.57 (-4.92)  
Tokyo Nikkei Avge 17791.55 (-644.82)

## INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base 10%  
3-month Interbank 10%  
3-month eligible bills 10%  
US: Prime 10%  
Federal Funds 3%  
3-month Treasury Bills 3.88-3.87%  
30-year bonds 101 1/2-101 1/2

## CURRENCIES

London: £ 1.7504  
DM 8426  
Swf 2.6107  
FF 9.2645  
Yen 132.24  
Imp 1.301  
ECU 0.717538  
£ 1.332654  
London: £ 1.332654

London: £ 1.332654

## GOLD

London Fixing: AM 850.60 pm 839.75  
close 837.80-838.30 (\$193.00)  
193.50)  
New York: Comex 837.75-838.25

## NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (May) \$18.50 bbl (\$18.95)

## RETAIL PRICES

RPI: 136.3 February (1987-100)  
\* Denotes midday trading price

Stores chief campaigns against rises

## Tesco to fight banks' plastic card charges

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH AND NEIL BENNETT

BRITAIN'S big retailers are bracing themselves for a confrontation with the clearing banks over increased charges for handling direct debit and credit card transactions.

Tesco, Britain's second-largest supermarket group, which yesterday announced a 25 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £546 million, gave warning that it would strongly resist the increases, which came into effect on April 1. There was also a veiled threat from Tesco that if charges did not come down, the group may consider suspending the direct debit system it has spent £20 million installing.

Sir Ian MacLaurin, Tesco's chairman, accused the banks of unilaterally increasing charges without negotiations to an unacceptable level. He said: "We believe the banks are behaving disgracefully. They have deeply upset us. We intend to make a firm line and we are not alone."

David Malpas, managing director at Tesco, said the group had written to the Office of Fair Trading about what it perceives as a cartel. Tesco is fighting the changes via the British Retailers Association. Mr Malpas said 20 per cent of Tesco's sales are paid for by direct debit with cards such as Switch and Connect.

Bank charges for processing a direct debit transaction have doubled in some cases and trebled in others, he said. Typically, a large retail group pays 6p for processing a direct debit transaction. From April 1 the charge has risen to 12p and in some cases 18p.

The group is also unhappy about a rise in credit card transaction handling fees. These increased from 1 per cent of the item sale price to 1.1 per cent and are set to rise to 1.3 per cent next year. However, the banks are

poised to stand firm. Ian Green, the general manager of Switch UK, said: "Retailers recognise that Switch is a great product, but they do not want to pay for it." He said Switch charges are rising because card issuers were demanding more money for guaranteeing payments.

Barclays, Britain's largest credit and debit card issuer and transaction processor, said credit card fees had fallen substantially since 1989 and the bank had lost money on the business in the past two years.

A spokeswoman said: "Retailers have seen the benefits of plastic cards. There are 45 million cards in Britain and they are a powerful spending force. The retailers are tough negotiators but we need to be tough as well because we need to make these charges realistic."

Tesco unveiled a strong set of figures yesterday despite the recession, which affected sales in the second-half last year.

Tesco increased 12.9 per cent to £7.6 billion and pre-tax profits grew 25.1 per cent to £546 million. Fully-diluted earnings per share grew 20.2 per cent to 19.95p and the final dividend is 4.3p, making 6.3p for the year, an increase of 20 per cent.

He said the group made no political donations last year. "We are apolitical but my top priorities for the economy are control of inflation, control of interest rates, retaining management talent in the UK and the generation of real jobs including encouragement of foreign investment."

Mr Malpas said the group made a spirited defence of its profit margins before a House of Commons select committee.

"Consumers in the UK have to spend a much smaller proportion of their disposable income on food compared to their counterparts in other developed countries."

"Our prices are lower than they were in 1985. Consumers in this country get an astonishingly good deal compared to their counterparts on the Continent," he said.

Malpas: complaint

group is serving 500,000 customers every Sunday at 200 stores and Sir Ian said there was a huge demand for Sunday shopping. The recession appears to be easing and the group's performance has improved steadily since the low point in November, he said.

Tesco has increased its market share from 9.4 per cent to 9.6 per cent. Twenty-four new stores were opened last year, at a cost of £700 million, and 28 are due to open this year.

These should create 7,000 jobs. The group is experimenting with a new small store format, Tesco Metro, and one is due to open in London's Covent Garden shortly.

Sir Ian, whose pay came under fire after last year's report and account showed he earned £1.48 million, more than £1 million of which was profit-related, said this year's report would show a sharp fall in director's emoluments.

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Malpas: complaint

Tempus, page 22



Where there's brass: Richard Holland, at the group's London factory, after announcing a rise in profits

## Recovery in world growth likely to be more modest

Boosey &amp; Hawkes in tune

THE improvement in world economic conditions that was to speed up recovery in Britain this year is likely to be more modest than previously expected, according to the latest assessment by two key international organisations.

Jean-Claude Paye, secretary general of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, said yesterday that the Paris-based organization of the leading 24 industrial economies could revise down slightly its growth forecast for 1992. Its last forecast, published in December, put growth in the real national product in the OECD area at 2.2 per cent this year, up from 1.1 per cent in 1991.

For 1993, the OECD predicted 3.3 per cent growth. M. Paye, speaking in Bonn, said the revision could come at the forthcoming OECD ministerial meeting on May 18-19.

The International Monetary Fund in Washington has, meanwhile, downgraded its forecast for global growth too. Washington sources said that growth in the industrial world was now expected to reach only 2 per cent this year, compared with the 2.8 per cent forecast last October. After "lacklustre" growth performance this year, the IMF board expects a pick-up to 3.25 per cent in 1993. America, whose recovery has yet to become firmly established, is seen leading the world recovery, expanding 1.5 per cent this year and 3.5 per cent next.

European growth is expected to be slower. But Germany, the regional powerhouse, is forecast to accelerate to 3.25 per cent next year from 1.25 per cent growth in 1992. The world as a whole, including the developing nations, is expected to grow more slowly than the industrial world, but speed up in 1993. Dissenting voices at the IMF believe that even the downgraded growth prognosis could still be over-optimistic.

They remain concerned that consumer confidence will continue to be constrained by the debt overhang in

America and persistent high interest rates in Europe. But he acknowledged that many people were concerned about the outlook for the world economy despite the fund's forecast of a pick-up next year. Despite his warning of slower growth, M. Paye made clear that he still expects general recovery in the OECD area during the second half of this year. The downward revision for the whole year reflected the delayed start to the pick-up in activity. He drew attention to the serious constraints that limit OECD countries' room for fiscal manoeuvre. Further increases in budget deficits could stoke inflation and hinder nascent recovery, he said.

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They remain concerned that consumer confidence will continue to be constrained by the debt overhang in

MUSIC publishing and instrument making sound an improbable counter to worldwide recession. But the combination has proved effective at Boosey & Hawkes, which enjoyed a 23.6 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £4 million.

Richard Holland, the chief executive, said: "We have not seen any effect of recession on the publishing business so far — including the first quarter of the current year. But we do expect to see some slowdown... this year." The publishing division's operating profits rose 31 per cent to £3.5 million.

Instrument making has been more affected by recession, although operating profits rose 13 per cent to £3.1 million, with sales to Japan and the Far East enhanced by the strong yen. However, Mr Holland said the British market had been one of the worst affected. To help remedy a rise in stocks of unsold instruments, nine jobs are to be shed at the group's brass factory at Edgware, London. A final dividend of 14.5p (12.4p) makes a total of 20p (16.4p).

Comment, page 25

## Tories creeping up on Labour Labour in disarray over Ashdown hung parliament

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## Crumbling island buys crumpling airline

BY MATTHEW BOND

WHAT do you do if 80 years of intensive phosphate mining has left your island just a metre or so above the advancing greenhouse-warmed waters of the Pacific? Answer: buy a plane — and fast. Faced with exactly that problem, Nauru, a tiny but rich island in the South Pacific, is endeavouring to do just that. In fact, it likes the idea so much, it wants to buy an entire airline.

The Nauru government yesterday made an A\$55 million (£24 million) offer for Compass Airlines, the Australian carrier whose failure last December left 125,000 would-be passengers with apparently worthless tickets. Since December, Compass has been run by provisional liquidators, who have been looking for between A\$30 million to A\$60 million of new capital to get the planes back in the air.

Despite having teamed up with Aus-

tin, a merchant bank, the Nauru government appears to be having difficulty in getting the liquidators to take its bid seriously. An earlier bid from the Nauru/Austin combination has already been rejected, and, on Friday, the liquidators announced their intention to sell Compass to Southern Cross Airlines, a company, which despite its name, has yet to put a plane in the air. But Kinza Clodium, Nauru's finance minister, is not a man to give up without a fight. After consulting with Austin, the revised offer shows the islanders are determined to enter the airline market.

The bid for Compass is Nauru's boldest attempt yet to improve what might be termed the quality of its national earnings. For after 80 years of mining — first by the Germans and then by "the phosphateers", a commission representing British, Australian and New Zealand national interests — Nauru's rich mineral resource is approach-

ing exhaustion. The price of realising its mineral wealth has been high. Over four-fifths of the island are said to resemble the surface of the moon, while the island is still pursuing a A\$72 million legal claim against the British, Australian and New Zealand governments for loss of profits prior to the island gaining independence in 1968. But the monetary rewards for the 6,000 or so islanders have been considerable.

Nauru's government has been aware that the phosphate income stream is nearing its end and has been diverting its national income into supposedly more secure international investments, including property. At one point, perhaps tired of the view out of the cabinet room window, the government toyed with the idea of buying a new island from the Australian government and moving the whole population to a more agreeable home. Presumably the view from 30,000ft is rather better.

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TEMPUS

# Profit figures stack up for Tesco

THERE are elements of the City that have been waiting for the three big supermarket groups to feel the effects of the recession. According to Tesco, it happened last year.

Far from faltering under the impact of a slowdown in volume growth, Tesco, whose chairman is Sir Ian MacLaurin, has emerged from one of the toughest years ever with a set of figures that would have sparkled even in the heady days of the boom.

In the 53 weeks to end-February, against 52 weeks to February 23, 1991, turnover rose 12.9 per cent to £7.6 billion and pre-tax profits grew 25.1 per cent from £436 million to £546 million. Operating profits grew 20 per cent to £503 million.

The £572 million rights issue last year benefited the interest line by £69 million and diluted the earnings per share figure 3 per cent. The extra week added 2 per cent to pre-tax profits. Operating margins increased from 6.6 per cent to 7.1 per cent and fully diluted earnings per share grew 20.2 per cent to 19.95p. Property profits fell from £19.1 million to £500,000 and the final dividend is 4.3p, making 6.3p for the year, a rise of 20 per cent.

These results have been achieved in a year when the underlying volume growth was marginal. New stores accounted for 6.5 per cent of the 13 per cent sales increase and the extra week for 2 per cent. Sunday opening added less than 1 per cent to sales.

Tesco has achieved its profit levels by opening stores that perform at a higher level than the old stores. Last year, £700 million was spent on 24 new stores. Sales per employee have risen from £106,044 to £119,246 in the last year, and profit per employee from £7,018 to £8,456.

Tesco says the recession is easing and sales are running 11 per cent ahead. There are still some who believe that Tesco's strategy of spending £700 million a year on store openings is flawed, but Tesco is sticking to its strategy and it has more than ten years of



Shelves stacked high: Sir Ian MacLaurin, the chairman of Tesco, in one of the company's superstores

uninterrupted profits growth to back it up.

Assuming pre-tax profits of £615 million (Henderson Crosthwaite) in the current year, the shares, up 4.5p to 255.5p, are trading on 11.7 times prospective earnings. They have bounced back from a low of 207p at Christmas and, while they might be unexciting in the short term, medium to longer term they do not look expensive.

## Meggitt

FOR Meggitt to have moved from gearing of 59 per cent to 26 per cent in 1991, even before the September rights issue that raised £39.6 million, is, if nothing else, an

indication of just how lax control of working capital must have been among some of Britain's leading companies before the recession encouraged better house-keeping.

The rights issue left £22 million net in the bank, although this will soon be deprieved by the \$33 million Endevco Corporation purchase announced last month. Bullish talk by Meggitt suggests that a further, similarly sized deal may be in prospect, probably in Europe and again in the control field.

Meggitt will be identified in the market's mind for the debacle of the bid for United Scientific Holdings, where the bidder backed

away at the last moment after new financial information came to light.

Ken Coates, the Meggitt chairman, is cautious of some of the opportunities that have been pushed across his desk of late. He admits the company looked at Penny & Giles, now under a £30 million agreed offer from Borthorpe, before deciding that the asking price was too high.

Meggitt's pre-tax profits are little changed in 1991 at £23.5 million against £23.9 million. Sandy Morris at County NarWesi expects another year of consolidation in 1992, although the Endevco buy, earnings-enhancing from the off, will

boost the pre-tax figure to £27 million, he believes.

The shares sell on about 11.5 times this year's earnings and 10.2 times the next year's. After a 25 per cent outperformance of the FTSE index over the past year, they cannot be described as a raging buy, but the group's proven ability at managing acquisitions should ensure longer-term support.

## St Ives

ST IVES will clap its corporate hands with glee if Labour wins tomorrow.

Robert Gavron, chairman, believes that an extra £600 million would be spent on education, which means more text books — which St

Ives would love to print.

A kick to the economy might free up the advertising spend, as the general public shakes off its recession blues.

And, on balance, Labour would be generally more positive for the economy, he thinks.

But whatever the colour of the government, St Ives is too far into the second half of the current financial year to be totally saved from the current economic gloom, and will, therefore, probably suffer more pressure on margins in the remaining months to end-July.

So after same again pre-tax profits of £10.1 million for the six months to end-January, some dip in year-on-year profits looks likely.

The shares are, however, a buy on the grounds that St Ives has already taken effective cost measures to cope with tougher conditions, and because the balance sheet remains strong.

With net cash of £3.4 million, compared with a net holding of £124,000 at the last balance sheet date, financial muscle is on its side. And if the smaller and weaker companies in the printing world are merely holding on by their finger tips, St Ives by contrast is waiting to move ahead.

When an upturn comes, the impact on St Ives's profits will be direct and impressive. An estimated 30 per cent of any £10 million of additional turnover will feed straight through to profits. So the days of merely maintaining interim dividends may not last too long.

St Ives is operating at 75 per cent printing capacity, but the group has secured a higher market share in various fields of operation. City merger and acquisition activity should perk up after the general election, and specialised printing is proving a growing market.

Pre-tax profits of £18 million (£20.2 million) would not be too disappointing, considering the trading background, and a strong profits recovery in 1993 seems likely.

A 24.4p share price, up 5p, and 18.8 times rating could look generous on a year's view.

## BUSINESS ROUNDUP

### Former Lex chief given £637,000 handshake

THE former managing director of Lex Service, who resigned soon after Christmas, received a £637,000 compensation package. The company's 1991 report and accounts disclose, Peter Turnbull's salary was between £265,000 and £270,000 in 1991. Lex made pre-tax profits of just £500,000 that year.

Mr Turnbull's post was not filled after his departure. A spokesman for the company said a managing director was no longer needed because of the sale of the electronics businesses in America and Europe, which Mr Turnbull had been involved in restructuring, and the consequent decrease in the company's size. Last month, Lex reported that in addition to the profits fall, from £9.1 million in 1990 caused by the difficult conditions in the car industry, it had lost the concession to supply Volvo cars after 33 years.

### Wescol cheers Leeds

A £1 MILLION contract to help build one of the world's largest football stands signals better fortune for Wescol, the structural engineering group. Construction industry problems brought a loss of £379,000 before tax in the six months to January 31 (£180,000 loss). But the Leeds United contract, backed by several new orders, will help boost turnover, which fell £1.7 million, after stripping out discontinued operations of Lumbrook Sheetings Contractors. Wescol believes it is on course to break even. There is again no dividend.

### Car dealer at £2.1m

USED car sales and after-sales service provided a bulwark against difficult conditions in the new vehicle market at Dagenham Motors Group, holding pre-tax profits in the six months to end-December at £2.1 million (£3.41 million). A 4.0p unchanged final dividend makes a same again 5.75p total. New vehicle sales fell 18.5 per cent and most of the new sales operations made little or no profit or ran at a loss. Used cars rose more than 30 per cent in sales and profits, while after-sales operations again provided most of the profits.

### Demerger considered

PITTENCREIFFE is considering the demerger of the mobile communications business from its oil and gas interests. Terry Henreghan, the chairman, said communications, developed to provide radio services for oil production sites, could command "a substantial value" that was not fully reflected in Pittencreiff's share price of 219p. Group pre-tax profits rose to £3.51 million (£2.03 million) last year and earnings to 17.25p (14.01p) a share. A final dividend of 3.50p (2.50p) makes a total of 6p (4.50p).

### BLP deficit rises

BLP Group, the troubled maker of wood laminates and veneers that is quoted on the USM, reports pre-tax losses of £2.6 million for last year (£198,000 loss). The company said its main markets in the UK and America had been severely affected by recession and turnover of the continuing businesses fell from £23.4 million to £21.7 million. The retained deficit for the year was £3.2 million or 38.2p a share. There is no ordinary dividend (0.25p), but payments on the preference shares are now up to date.

### Ipeco pays more

IEPO Holdings, the manufacturer of aircraft seats based in Southend, Essex, is raising its dividend for last year after a resilient performance in a "most hostile" environment and despite a slight dip in profits. Pre-tax profits slipped 5.8 per cent to £3.38 million on turnover up 0.3 per cent to £18.1 million. The final dividend is 2.2p (2p), making 3.4p (3.2p). Earnings per share were 8.19p (8.74p). Ipeco said its trading position and strong balance sheet gave hope for further advances in the current year.

### Black reduces losses

BLACK & EDGINGTON Group, the supplier of hospitality tents and crowd barriers formerly known as Tubular Edgington, reported reduced interim losses and expects a return to profitability in the second half. The company suffered a pre-tax loss of £1.96 million in the six months to end-January (loss of £1.78 million). The figures were helped by a fall in interest payable to £266,000, against £930,000. Losses per share are reduced to 0.4p from 8.1p last time. Again, there is no dividend.

### Addison issue flops

THE £16 million rights issue by Addison Consultancy Group, the market research company, to finance an acquisition of businesses from the collapsed Maxwell empire has flopped, with only 2.4 per cent of the new shares taken up. The nine-for-four issue was priced at 12p compared with yesterday's unchanged market price of 11p and was underwritten by Robert Fleming.

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SKF

### Enter Sky Dragon Charter

A GROUP of farmers in China are foreshadowing their future to take to the skies — but are having to contend with old-order bureaucracy in their struggle to begin the country's first privately run air service.

The farmers, from wealthy Jiangxi county in east China's Zhejiang province, signed a contract on Sunday with the government-run Nanjing United Airlines to provide a service between Zhejiang's Wenzhou and Shanghai, the largest city in China.

Under the one-year contract, the farmers will provide flights twice a week, using a Chinese-made Yun 7-100 aircraft, a Nanjing United Airlines official said. The farmers, who are calling

themselves Cangnan Sky Dragon Charter Airline Co, will sell seats on the 52-passenger aircraft for 150 yuan (£16) each.

They will pay Nanjing United a fee equal to 82 per cent of the flight capacity — anything they sell above that level they can keep as profit.

Conservative bureaucrats in Peking could still clip the farmers' wings, however.

An official at the Civil Aviation Administration of China said that the organisation would investigate and close down the farmers' service if it found anything wrong.

An earlier foray by the farmers into chartering aircraft ran into difficulties with Chinese bureaucracy last month. Since July last year

the group had been renting a Russian-made aircraft to fly between Wenzhou and Changsha, capital of Hunan province. This generated revenue of close to two million yuan.

But they had to stop flights on March 25 when the regional government-owned carrier — whose plane it was — transferred the aircraft elsewhere, an official of the Hunan Civil Aviation Administration (HCAA) said.

The farmers, not to be outdone, hope to start again — maybe even using a Boeing 737 jet.

But "the decision rests with the Hunan authorities", the Hunan aviation administration official said.

(Reuters)

## CDC swells coffers with £46m sale in HK to Chinese

BY ROSS TIEMAN AND LULU YU

CIVIL servants at the Commonwealth Development Corporation have been putting their private-sector banking competitors to shame for years by realising healthy profits on investments in Third World infrastructure.

The CDC's latest realisation, of a 6.86 per cent stake in Hong Kong container terminal operator Modern Terminals Limited (MTL), is, however, by far its most spectacular to date.

The corporation, a little-known British development bank, run by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, invested £2 million in MTL in 1971. Yesterday, it announced agreement to sell that stake to China Merchant Holdings for £46 million.

Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Co (P&O), the British shipping group, also said it would sell 8.1 per cent of its 23 per cent holding in MTL to China Merchant for £55 million. The deals are

significant both for the attention that they focus on the CDC, and for their signals about the panacea of Hong Kong's future development under China.

The CDC's windfall profit comes only a week before the Monopolies and Mergers Commission is scheduled to complete its first review of CDC operations since the bank was created in 1948.

The MMC report on the desk of the incoming foreign secretary will show that the CDC has generated a surplus every year since 1955. Almost unique among British public corporations, the corporation is allowed to keep its profits.

Accumulated surpluses, access to cheap-rate loans set aside for government foreign aid, and the spur from the MTL realisation will this year enable the CDC to invest £200 million in Third World projects. Schemes to re-plant hardwoods to replace lost

tropical forest, especially in poorer countries in Africa and the Pacific, are now an urgent priority, the CDC believes.

In Hong Kong, meanwhile, China Merchant, with 15 per cent, will become the second-largest shareholder in MTL, after the Wharf group, founded by the late Sir YK Pao, which owns 26 per cent.

Peking's expansion in Hong Kong in the run-up to the sovereignty changeover in 1997 has been rapid. Chinese firms have made numerous acquisitions in the colony, often using their political ties to after blue-chip companies or contracts and franchises.

The Chinese have significant stakes in Cathay Pacific Airways, and telephone franchise Hong Kong Telecom.

They are also active in the property sector, taking over from the Japanese as Hong Kong's largest investors. As Hong Kong builds its multi-billion dollar airport, Chinese contractors are competitive bids.

China Merchant, the biggest shipping agency in Hong Kong, has long been interested in the territory's container terminals, which are operated by MTL and Hong Kong International Terminals (HIT), a subsidiary of Mr Li Ka-shing's Hutchison Whampoa group.

Hong Kong has the largest privately owned container operations in the world, and is the second busiest port after Singapore. The outlook for the industry is excellent despite an American recession and falling exports because Hong Kong is the principal port for southern China.

Last year, the government granted MTL and HIT rights to develop a terminal, with the understanding that the two would find Chinese partners for the project. As HIT already has a major Chinese shareholder, China Merchant has been expected to team up with MTL.

P&O, which acquired a secondary listing on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange last September, said yesterday that it wanted to release capital to expand in Hong Kong and the Far East. It also hinted at the formation of P&O Asia, to be headquartered in the colony.

Lord Sterling, the chairman, said: "In the six weeks following our appointment we worked extremely hard towards a sale of the whole Alma Holdings Group, but it quickly became apparent that a buyer was not going to be found."

The Angus plant, which manufactured sugar-coated sweets, has been closed since early last month. Production is expected to resume

by early summer and most of the 20 to 30 former employees are expected to be taken on by Cadbury.

The deal leaves KPMG Peat Marwick, the receiver, still looking for buyers for much of the Alma group.

Factories in Glenrothes, Kirkcaldy, the rest of the Keiller factory in Dundee, and the Alma, Barker & Dobson, Keiller, Bensons and Midland brand names remain unsoled.

Keiller is the market leader in butterscotch, and Alma produced a range of novelty children's sweets including products using Master of the Universe and Batman characters.

All production in the Alma factories has stopped and all but 115 of the company's 775 staff have been made redundant. Before going into receivership its losses were running at some £1 million a month.

Rod Owen, of KPMG Peat Marwick, said: "In the six weeks following our appointment we worked extremely hard towards a sale of the whole Alma Holdings Group, but it quickly became apparent that a buyer was not going to be found."

The Angus plant, which manufactured sugar-coated sweets, has been closed since early last month. Production is expected to resume

## Cadbury buys the Victory V brand

BY JONATHAN PRYNN

CADBURY Schweppes, the food and drinks group, is swallowing two of Britain's best known cough, sweet brands.

The company is to pay £3.1 million to buy the Hacks and Victory V brands from the receivers of Alma Holdings, the Scottish sweet manufacturer that collapsed in February. The deal will give Cadbury, which produces Throaties and Zutes cough sweets, an 8 per cent share of the £68 million UK medicated confectionery market.

A spokeswoman for Cadbury said that the two acquired brands would initially be developed in the UK market, but their potential for overseas markets would also be assessed. Hacks already has a strong presence in the markets of south east Asia.

The purchase price includes the Hacks and Victory V manufacturing equipment, which will be transferred from the Keiller factory in Dundee, and the Angus manufacturing facility, also in Dundee.

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## Sherwood sees wood through trees

BY OUR CITY STAFF

SHERWOOD Group, Britain's biggest sockmaker and Europe's largest lacemaker, has once again shrugged off the effects of the recession, reporting pre-tax profits for the year to end-December up 36 per cent to £14.5 million.

The company has achieved impressive profits growth since coming to the Unlisted Securities Market six years ago, and has more than doubled profits since 1988 during a period of slow growth and less consumer spending on clothes.

David Parker, the chairman and managing director, said there had been a trend during the past few years to make socks from healthier, but less long-lasting, natural fibres. The biggest growth market is that for character socks for children, he added. Sherwood has recently won the licence to supply Disney character socks in the UK and at Euro Disney in Paris. Sher-

wood supplies most of the high street retailers, including Marks and Spencer, its biggest customer, and has a 20 per cent share of the UK market after its acquisition of Samuel Eden in June and Charles W Hall in January. The lace division, two thirds of whose sales are made overseas, also performed "exceptionally well," Mr Parker said.

Year-end gearing was 44 per cent, the first time it has fallen below 50 per cent since the flotation. Mr Parker said he hoped for further reduction during the current year. He described prospects for 1992 as "very good."

The company has applied for a full listing, partly to "help attract a wider shareholder base".

It is also proposing a bonus issue of four new shares for every one held. The final dividend is increased to 7.5p, making 11.4p for the year, a 25 per cent increase.



Material gain: David Parker, head of Sherwood

## PowerGen breaks mould on labour relations

BY LIZA DONALDSON AND ROSS TIEMAN

TRADE unions at PowerGen, the electricity generator, will today begin consulting the company's 7,000 workers on an agreement that could pioneer the biggest revolution in power industry labour relations since nationalisation 43 years ago.

The breakthrough deal, tabled yesterday, envisages the end of national bargaining, a cut in the number of employee grades from 32 to 11, and salaries ranging from £10,000 to £40,000 being negotiated simultaneously around a single table by trade unions and management. Expected to be agreed by June 1, the deal will mark the beginning of the biggest decentralisation of national pay bargaining in the newly privatised industries.

Electricity industry employers,

now divided into about 20 companies, have given the requisite 12 months' notice that they are withdrawing from national bargaining by January 31 next year. The move will affect 136,000 highly unionised employees. Among power industry workers, 82 per cent belong to a trade union, a far higher level than in the private sector as a whole.

PowerGen, chaired by Sir Graham Day, is seen as the standard bearer for the companies' bargaining agents in the industry. The group is anxious to increase employee flexibility after an energetic efficiency campaign that has cut employee numbers 40 per cent in the past two years.

The company is seeking single-table bargaining with its six recognised unions, to replace negotiations with three separate groups: the engineer/managers, manual and clerical workers. The proposals also

envision a single salary spine of 11 grades, replacing 32 national grades, and harmonisation of pay and conditions for white and blue collar workers.

John Hart, personnel director of PowerGen, said the agreement would remove artificial barriers to career progression.

The deal will increase PowerGen's annual wages bill of £160 million to £170 million a year by 1.5 per cent. Employees will be offered a cash incentive of £400 each plus 2 per cent of basic salary as a reward for signing the new contracts.

Other features of the offer are a single pay date from next April and common rules on overtime (more than 37 hours a week) and non-social hours. All pay cheques will be monthly.

Eddie Newall, chief negotiator for

manual workers at the GMB general union, the biggest among the workforce, said the deal would be put to members in a ballot. The GMB would recommend acceptance because the package removed barriers to promotion and improved terms. Nalgo, the white-collar union, is also recommending acceptance.

A number of electricity companies are likely to follow PowerGen's lead. A similar deal is being proposed at National Grid for the company's 6,000 employees, and at Mamweb, with 4,600 employees. Nuclear Electric is looking for a single-table deal for its 12,500 workers. However, National Power, with 12,500 employees, favours multi-table bargaining with the three traditional bargaining groups. Seaboard, with 6,000 staff, is negotiating a pyramid structure with five bargaining groups, performance-related pay and 150 managers on personal contracts.

## Meggitt expects boost

Meggitt, the specialist engineer chaired by Ken Coates, is looking forward to a spending spree by the Kuwaitis and other Middle Eastern countries as orders to repair damage done in the Gulf war are finally placed. The group, which saw pre-tax profits slip from £23.9 million to £23.5 million last year, is remains in acquisition mode even after the \$53 million cash purchase of Endevco Corporation, an American maker of transducers, pressure controls and sensors.

A final dividend of 3.6p makes a total increased 5.6 per cent to 3.6p. Mr Coates said the group was seeing an average of one company a day offered as an acquisition, of which perhaps one of two a week were worth following up. *Tempus*, page 22

## Wardle steady

Operating efficiencies and a tighter rein on finances left pre-tax profits at Wardle Stores little changed at £4.36 million (£4.29 million) in the half-year to February 29. The interim dividend is held at 4p.

## Pegasus drops

Pegasus reports a 59 per cent fall in first-half pre-tax profits to £320,000, but is maintaining its interim dividend at 3.5p. Derek Moon, chief executive, said the fall was exaggerated by £272,000 of research and development expenditure.

## Dredging dips

British Dredging, the building materials supplier, is maintaining its dividend for last year despite a side in profits. Pre-tax profits fell 28.4 per cent to £2.47 million. The final dividend is 4.8p, giving an unchanged 7.4p.

## Losses cut

Bourne End Properties reduced its pre-tax losses to £1.4 million last year compared with £2.2 million in 1990. The total dividend is halved to 1p.

## Laser buys

Countrywide Properties has a 74,300 sq ft office development from 2,900 to 2,300 in 1987, and the company said in its results statement that crystal workers had been put on short-time to reduce excess capacity. Sales fell from £12.307.9 million to £12.292.1 million.

The group has introduced a new range of crystal called Marquis. It is being made in Germany, Portugal and Yugoslavia.

The range is twice as profitable as the high-cost crystal produced at the Waterford factories in the Irish Republic.

Baillie Gifford Technology, which has made capital repayments since 1990, says further payments could follow from the sale of Redwood International to IML. It is paying a dividend of 0.2p (1.4p).



Better shape: David Jones, the chief executive, who reported improved annual results for Next yesterday

## Next cuts a dash back into black

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH

NEXT, the retail group founded by George Davies that crashed spectacularly 18 months ago, is on the road to recovery. Pre-tax profits of £12.3 million in the year to January, after a bottom-line loss of £4.8 million last time, have enabled the group to resume dividend payments.

The figures for last year were clean of 1990's exceptional and extraordinary costs of £429 million, which resulted from the excessive expansion of the mid-Eighties, the recession and property slump.

Next has survived by selling Gratian, its mail order

business, to Otto Versand of Germany for £167.5 million. Group pre-tax and pre-exceptional profits reached £12.3 million after last time's £7.2 million loss. Operating profits were £11.1 million, against profits of £7.2 million, and the interest line has improved from a charge of £14.4 million to a gain of £1.2 million. Turnover was £462 million, against £478 million last year. Turnover was £462 million, against £478 million last year.

Earnings were 3.08p a share, against a loss of 13.58p, and the dividend is 0.75p. Lord Wolfson of Sunningdale, the chairman, said Next anticipated being

able to recommend the payment of an interim and a final net dividend in the current year.

David Jones, the chief executive, said that since the restructuring plan was introduced two years ago, the group has sold 100 stores, many of which were not trading profitably. An improvement in the cost base and product range led to a strong performance from the shops in the second half of last year. Second-half profits from the retail business were £9.1 million, compared with a first-half loss of £1.9 million.

Next resisted the urge to discount prices outside the sale period and Christmas

trading was strong. Sales at Next Directory were below the group's expectations but there were fewer markdowns. The directory made profits of £4 million, against £2.6 million last time.

Club24, the credit business now being wound down, reduced gross debts from £185 million to £163 million. Of the £3.2 million provision, £2.3 million has been utilised and Mr Jones said he did not expect all of the remaining £10 million to be needed.

Since February 1, retail sales are running 7 per cent ahead of last year despite a cut in selling price. Directory sales are up 3 per cent. The shares rose 5p to 71p.

## Losses at Waterford Wedgwood reduced

BY MARTIN BARROW

WATERFORD Wedgwood reduced losses in 1991 but said that the market for its crystal and china was still being affected by recession.

The Dublin-based group cut pre-tax losses to £12.7 million (£2.52 million) from £12.1 million, in line with market expectations, reflecting lower interest charges and exceptional items.

Losses were 0.75p a share, reduced from 4.29p. Again, there is no dividend.

Shareholders were given a warning that the adverse trading environment continued into the opening months of the current year.

Bernard Somers, an accountant who was in charge of GM's North American car making operations, which lost over \$1 billion last year.

Two months ago, when he unveiled the worst loss in American corporate history, Mr Stempel said it would take some time to turn around GM.

In a statement, the outside directors said that they wanted a "more aggressive" approach to cost cutting. GM lost \$4.5 billion last year and proposes to cut 74,000 jobs and 21 plants by 1995. Analysts now expect a major acceleration of this plan.</

## STOCK MARKET

## Shares dimmed after bright start

SHARE prices managed to extend Monday's gains but closed below their best as market-makers began battering down the hatches ahead of polling day.

Instead it was left up to the pound to hold centre stage making impressive gains against the mark. The pound's performance also in-

Whitbread spent another nervous day after the news that it will be making write-offs of £37 million. The shares ended 4½ up at 363p after touching 356p on reports that a seller was trying to unload 4 million shares. But with only 3.4 million traded, it looks as if he may have been forced to withdraw.

Spurred government securities, which ended with rises of almost £1 at the long end.

Conditions in the equity market remained thin with brokers reporting a virtual absence of retail demand.

Market-makers were in no mood to take positions until after the election. The futures market made all the early running with the June series

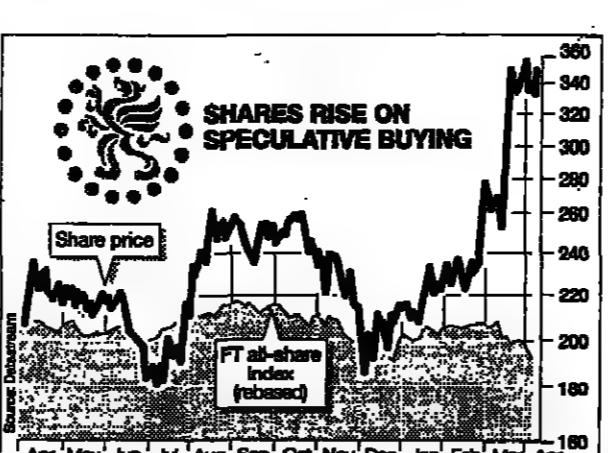
of the FT-SE 100 index being used by dealers to hedge their positions in the cash market.

The FT-SE 100 index was up almost 17 points in early trading but was unable to maintain the momentum and closed 3.3 ahead at 2,404.2. A total of 433 million shares changed hands, a small improvement on the previous day's figure of 411 million.

There was selective support for those international companies regarded as partially immune to the political upheavals on the domestic front. Gains were recorded in Reuters, 14p higher at £11.41, BOC Group 2p to 667p, RTZ 4p to 574p and Wellcome 18p to £11.65.

ICI also hardened 9p to £11.58 despite a profit downgrading Hoare Govett ahead of first quarter figures expected on April 30. These should reveal pretax profits of about £200 million. Despite the downgrading, Hoare remains positive about prospects for ICI.

Hanson, which owns almost 3 per cent of ICI, firmed 2½ to 215p ahead of a presentation for investors in New York. Hanson is seen as



another company insulated from the political worries at home.

Waste Management International made an encouraging start to first time dealings in a conditional market. The shares were offered at 5p each by lead manager Merrill Lynch valuing the entire company at £2.19 billion. It ended the session at 612p, a premium of 27p.

There was a flurry of speculative excitement in the banking sector as Midland Bank rose 12p to 347p on overnight reports from the Far

East claiming the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank was ready to offer 411p a share. But the reports were later denied. Hongkong and Shanghai already owns 15 per cent of Midland and has plans for a full merger.

There were also gains for Lloyds 4p to 350p, National Westminster 5p to 270p, Standard Chartered 2p to 437p and Barings 1p to 295p, while Royal Bank of Scotland eased 2p to 152p.

The oil sector was again a bright spot as the two-way pull on shares continued to

celebrate a return to the black with a rise of 5p to 71p.

The group reported pre-tax profits of £12.3 million against a loss last time of £40.7 million and expects to pay both an interim and final dividend. Sales, so far, this year are 7 per cent higher despite a reduction of 5 per cent in retail space.

The rest of the stores sector

dominate sentiment. American investors have been big buyers of British oil companies in recent weeks. Further interest has also been generated by the heightening of tension in the Middle East which has boosted the crude price on world markets. Salomon Brothers and Schroder Wurtheim have both been buying BP, 2½p cheaper at 252p.

But British brokers and fund managers are less enthusiastic about the oil sector and remain sellers. Esterline Oil firmed 2p to 260p and Shell 1p to 458p while Lassco eased 3p to 195p.

Tesco, the supermarket chain, climbed 4½p to 255½p after weighing in with full year figures exceeding even the most optimistic City forecasts. Pre-tax profits soared £109.3 million to £45.5 million with operating margins up from 6.8 per cent to 7.1 per cent. Sir Ian MacLaurin, Tesco's chairman, said there were signs that the recession was drawing to a close with food sales recovering from last year's depressed levels.

Next, the fashion retailer,

Analysts are taking an encouraging view of long-term prospects for Thorn EMI, down 1p to 746p, with both County NatWest WoodMac and Baring Securities recommending the shares as a buy. County has downgraded its profit estimates by 4 per cent, but still expects the re-rating of the shares to gather pace.

also made headway encouraged by reports that consumer confidence was growing. Among those companies to show plus-signs on the day were Argos 5p to 234p, Burton 1p to 37½p, Dixons 6p to 196p, Kingfisher 2p to 463p, and Marks and Spencer 5p to 284p.

MICHAEL CLARK

## NEW YORK

## Blue chips weakened by early profit-taking

New York — Blue chips were weak in the late morning because of profit-taking and the effect of Japanese share losses. The Dow Jones industrial average dropped by 13 points to 3,262.49.

□ Hong Kong — Shares staged a recovery in continued quiet trading as bargain-hunters took heart after Monday's rise that trimmed sharp, early losses. The Hang Seng index jumped 29.53 points to 4,926.43, while yesterday's turnover improved to HK\$1.77 billion (£131 million) from Monday's turnover of HK\$1.38 billion. Shares in HSBC Holdings, which was hurt recently by its planned merger with Britain's Midland Bank and its exposure to Olympia & York, the troubled property group, rose HK\$1 to HK\$39.25. HSBC Holdings is the parent company of the

□ Sydney — The market closed stronger, but below its highs. It made big gains after overnight strength in New York and London and talk of a cut in interest rates. But Tokyo was again a negative influence. The all-ordinary index closed 6.9 points up at 1,583.7. (Reuters)

## TOKYO

## Nikkei drops below 18,000 to five-year low

Tokyo — Prices plunged and the Nikkei index closed below 18,000 for the first time since November 1986. The Nikkei ended down 644.82 points, or 3.5 per cent, at 17,791.5.

Arbitrage unwinding and institutional selling battered prices as most investors retreated to the sidelines amid a continuing dearth of buying incentives.

Amy Yip, of Baring Securities, said: "People have a feeling of total helplessness right now. Sitting on the sidelines, they see the Nikkei hitting new lows. Most prefer to be late for the eventual recovery than attempting to play the hero."

The Nikkei index fell to its lowest close since November 1986, when it finished at 17,727.91. Turnover edged up to about 200 million shares compared with 192 million on Monday. Declining issues outnumbered rises by nearly nine to one. With 895 lower, 100 higher and 111 unchanged.

The market opened little changed, but then index-selling began, driving the Nikkei Index lower while foreign bargain-hunting, which was the market's main prop, largely evaporated.

Banks extended sharp declines amid continuing worries about reserve requirements and loans exposure. Fuji Bank slumped Y100 to Y1,270 and Mitsubishi Bank Y170 to 1,520. (Reuters)

## WALL STREET

	Aug 7	Aug 8	Aug 7	Aug 8	Aug 7	Aug 8
AMZ Inc	525	525	157	157	200	200
Amoco	100	100	100	100	100	100
Ashley Lake	615	605	424	424	424	424
Ashley Life	424	424	424	424	424	424
At&T (102)	377	377	377	377	377	377
Air Prod & Chem	421	421	421	421	421	421
Alcatel	437	437	437	437	437	437
Alcatel Alsthom	437	437	437	437	437	437
Alcatel Standard	345	345	345	345	345	345
Alcatel Cables	264	264	264	264	264	264
Alcatel Optic	264	264	264	264	264	264
Alcatel S.A.	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (10)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (102)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (103)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (104)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (105)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (106)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (107)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (108)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (109)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (110)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (111)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (112)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (113)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (114)	176	176	176	176	176	176
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Alcatel S.A. (116)	176	176	176	176	176	176
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Alcatel S.A. (118)	176	176	176	176	176	176
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Alcatel S.A. (121)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (122)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (123)	176	176	176	176	176	176
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Alcatel S.A. (128)	176	176	176	176	176	176
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Alcatel S.A. (130)	176	176	176	176	176	176
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Alcatel S.A. (133)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (134)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (135)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (136)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (137)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (138)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (139)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (140)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (141)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (142)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (143)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (144)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (145)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (146)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (147)	176	176	176	176	176	176
Alcatel S.A. (148)	176	176	176	176	176	176

ships weakened  
by profit-taking

## COMMENT Tories share German burden

John Major's alibi finally appeared in Paris yesterday, although it may be too late to influence the jury. The OECD is preparing to cut its growth forecast for the world's main industrial countries as a whole this year because the recovery has, generally, been later in arriving than the organisation's economists expected. Norman Lamont, it seems, was not alone. Recovery will begin in earnest, but still slowly, in the second half, leaving the OECD's 2.2 per cent forecast for the year looking stranded.

Across the Atlantic, the IMF is predicting only 2 per cent for the world economy and for the European Community, rising to 3 per cent in Europe and 3½ per cent in America in 1993, but Michel Camdessus, its managing director, has admitted that plenty of fund directors think that takes an excessively optimistic view of next year's prospects.

In both cases, one of the key reasons for caution is the continuing high level of Germany's short-term interest rates. These are keeping interest rates excessively high in other ERM countries, where high government borrowing also limits potential to stimulate the economy safely.

Jean-Claude Paye, the OECD's secretary general, has a picturesque way of rationalising this. It is, he suggests, a form of burden-sharing. "I consider German unification a historically important event, and one that is of benefit to us all so it is not shocking and abnormal that a form of burden-sharing, mostly through interest rates, is occurring."

Since all the main parties contesting tomorrow's election are committed to the ERM, they might sagely nod agreement. Former Conservative MPs defending marginal seats might choose a less charitable form of words.

## Managing Waste

The message from Merrill Lynch, the American securities house handling the Waste Management International share issue, is that the mechanism of stabilisation tried out in last year's BT II issue and repeated here is the way flotations will work in future, so the market might as well get used to it. The system helps to ensure a stable aftermarket for all investors, but leaves the private investor not knowing quite what is happening.

Waste Management is not a complete rerun of the so-called "green shoe" used in BT II, in that the seller is not pledging to put up any extra shares that may be needed if the price rises. Instead, Merrill Lynch, as lead underwriter, will initially go short in its client's stock to meet oversubscription and buy spare shares that may come on the market as stags sell. The inherent risk will doubtless be reflected in its fees.

Stabilisation is the rule in American stock offerings and common in international issues, but it is barely known in the City. The Waste Management float has already required concessions from the Stock Exchange because of its curious hybrid nature, half placing and half tender offer.

The American house will not say by how much it will go short, or how long stabilisation will take place; it could last 30 days, but will most likely end earlier. Institutions trading on Seaq can find out from their trading screens as with BT II, and will, therefore, know when it comes to an end. Private investors will not.

Merrill Lynch says this is not a float aimed at the private investor. Too true, with stock being offered at more than 30 times historic earnings. A chunk of shares is earmarked for the British retail market, but caution is advised.

Richard Jeffrey says that Labour's tax plans would cripple the house market and personal wealth to create a recessionary spiral second to none

If a Briton's home is his castle, then Labour's personal tax proposals have to be seen as the most severe assault yet launched on its structure. The shadow budget would reduce the incomes of families below retirement age by more than £1.6 billion, equivalent to a half per cent decline in consumer spending. These are the families critical to financing Britain's housing market. Two thirds of households own their own homes, two thirds of these are mortgaged and the average mortgage is £48,000, costing about £400 per month net in interest. Mortgage payments therefore take about 30 per cent of the average family's after-tax income.

You can argue it is right that those on higher incomes should pay a higher proportion of earnings in tax. And, you can argue that many of the defects that have become evident in our economy after 18 months of recession stem directly from mistakes made by a Conservative chancellor, between 1987 and 1989. But Labour's plans for personal tax threaten to have a much more damaging impact on the quality of family life than anything the Conservatives have done over the past few years.

Labour's tax proposals appear to hit only those at the upper end of the income scale — if not the super-rich. This is far from the truth. A relatively small proportion of taxpayers would suffer, but they are by no means only the rich: better paid, yes; rich, not necessarily.

A large proportion of this group had the benefit of tax cuts, but they have also had to cope with the consequent asset price inflation. For many this has meant accepting an extremely high level of mortgage borrowing. Most have survived the recession up to now but only by cutting current expenditure and contributing to the recession. Even the more prudent are now living close to the margin and their ability to pay the tax increase that will be demanded by John Smith has to be questioned. Many more could be forced into defaulting on their mortgage payments.

When the economy is viewed as a static system, it appears that as few as 10 per cent of taxpayers are hit. The web spreads dramatically when the economy is viewed as a dynamic system — with dire consequences. It is not possible to isolate one section of the community and pretend that the damage done to its financial circumstances will not hurt the economy as a whole.

The increases in personal taxation



Trying out the driving seat: a victorious Neil Kinnock could deliver a heavy blow to the house market

suggested by Labour are way too severe to be implemented in one step — there is no shock absorber within the system to help damp the initial impact of the change. Even those who believe in the general philosophy behind the tax proposals, including many Conservative voters who felt the 20-point cut in the top tax rate in 1988 was too great, must accept that Labour's current tax formula would have disastrous consequences. Because of the way the economy reacts to sudden changes, these consequences would be more savage than the overshooting from the 1987 and 1988 Budgets. The economy has a greater capacity to absorb more demand than it has to adapt to less.

The initial effect, at least, is clear. A proportion of the community finds the tax burden imposed on it is beyond its means, because, for many people, the cost of servicing a mortgage is the largest single outgoing each month and cannot be changed. Hundreds of thousands of such families will conclude that the only way to make ends meet is to sell and buy a cheaper house. In its current fragile state, however, the housing market does not have the capacity to absorb such an increase in supply.

particularly not at the top. The price of housing at the upper end of the market will collapse. The process will not be contained there. The housing market is a continuous system and the shock waves will move through the price range until the whole market has been affected.

In this economic cycle, we have already seen house prices fall 15 per cent or more in many areas. They could drop an additional 25 per cent. During this process, few of those who initiated the cascade will have been able to improve their finances. If they have been able to sell their homes, it is likely to have been at a big capital loss. The wealth of the personal sector will have slumped.

Just as the impact of higher taxes cannot and will not be contained in a small area of the housing market, so the shock waves will continue to spread throughout the economy. The resulting loss of wealth will hit confidence at a very sensitive stage of the economic cycle when morale is already at an extremely low ebb.

Loss of wealth is, in particular, bound to reduce household spending. It is debatable whether the fall in house prices seen to date has had much direct impact on consumption.

tion, since it merely took the froth off the market. A further 25 per cent fall would cut housing values below purchase prices for about a third of homeowners, particularly those who have bought most recently. To a certain extent this will simply force the market to stagnate, but for those who have to move (either from financial necessity or because of, say, a change in work location), there will be a one-off financial loss. Many of the remainder will need to raise savings to compensate for the fall in house prices and the resulting decline in their wealth.

To this unholy mix must be added the likely extra ingredient of a base rate rise. The markets have already shown their distaste when faced with the prospect of a Labour government, driving sterling down to its limit in the exchange-rate mechanism. It is not unreasonable to think in terms of a 2 per cent rise in base rates at some time after a Labour election victory as the new chancellor has his nerve tested by foreign exchange markets sceptical of Labour's record on inflation.

Loss of wealth is, in particular, bound to reduce household spending. It is debatable whether the fall in house prices seen to date has had much direct impact on consumption. For a family with an average £48,000 mortgage, a 2 per cent rise in the mortgage rate would raise interest repayments by almost £65 a month after tax. This will be hard to find in household budgets already stretched by the recession. For those who have also been penalised by Labour's new tax regime, such amounts might be impossible.

Faced with this squeeze on incomes, families will have to cut discretionary spending, making a further hit in consumers' expenditure unavoidable. The top 20 per cent of earners in the UK, who would either suffer from Labour's tax plans or receive no benefit, account for more than 35 per cent of household spending. Savers, who benefit from higher interest rates, tend to be older and to have a lower marginal propensity to consume.

Many retailers, already hit hard over the 18 months, will find this new dip in demand delivers a mortal blow. The shock waves will not stop here. Consider the construction industry and institutions that rely on property to meet their commitments. With the economy entering a severe second recession, there will be more unemployment.

Faced by a further decline in consumption, a majority of companies will attempt to pare back spending on plant and machinery to a bare minimum, rather than increasing investment in response to Labour's incentives. Wages will come under further pressure. Nor will government finances escape unscathed; falling activity in the economy will reduce income tax, VAT and corporation tax receipts. A Labour government might still be able to meet its expenditure commitments, but only by borrowing more at higher interest rates or by raising taxation ...

There will be some good news. Ironically, for those sceptical foreign exchange dealers, the balance of payments would swing into surplus. Inflation would fall and could even turn negative. Automatic stabilisers might be expected to damp the impact on the economy. Unfortunately, recent experience shows this is not the case. The economy's reaction to tax cuts pushed through by Nigel Lawson up to 1988 illustrates that when given an unanticipated shock, the economy becomes extremely unstable. Confronted with the opposite shock of sharply rising tax rates, the economy could be destabilised.

In the two years to the end of 1988, total domestic expenditure rose 13.5 per cent in real terms, about 8 per cent faster than the sustainable rate. The joint impact of Labour's proposed tax plans, a rise in the mortgage rate and a greater loss of confidence is likely to cut total domestic expenditure by a further 2.5 per cent before any recovery.

Instead of the spiralling inflation of the late Eighties, there will be a recessionary spiral. A spiral that will undermine personal sector incomes and wealth and which, when it is over, will leave the UK looking back on one of the worst periods in its economic history.

The author is head of research at Charterhouse Tilney, the broker



## Betting on the election

LIFE — and the election — looks different through the eyes of a bookie. Ron Pollard, of Ladbrokes, the man who introduced political betting in 1963, was yesterday offering odds of 5:1 on a Labour victory, 3:1 against a Conservative win and 400:1 against a win by the Liberal Democrats. In the event of a hung parliament, he believes that both Major and Kinnock will stay on to lead their respective parties in the next general election, but if one party were to get an overall majority, he thinks that the leader of the other party would be forced to leave. As for likely successors, from Friday he will be offering odds on either Heseltine, Hurd and Clarke to replace Major, or Smith, Brown and Blair — "as an outsider" — to replace Kinnock. "Only one thing changes prices and that's money," says the inimitable Pollard. "Opinion polls don't change them at all." Not everyone, however, agrees with his judgment. At 11pm on Saturday, Pollard was contacted at home about a Stoke-on-Trent man who wanted to place a £14,000 bet on the Tories getting a majority. "He must be mad," concludes Pollard. "But if he is right, he stands to win £142,000." And late yesterday, a London man wagered £20,000, also on a Tory win. "It's the biggest bet of the election," Pollard says. "The odds are altering. I offered him 11:4. He stands to win £55,000 if they win."

**Tough near the top**  
MANAGERS at Grand Metropolitan are about to be warned. In a radio interview to be broadcast on LBC this evening, Sir Allen Sheppard,



the chairman, admits that he does not delegate. By way of explanation, he adds: "My people are too good to be delegated to." GrandMet attracts serious risk-takers, so I don't have to tell people what to do, they just get on with it." If they do not get on with it, he says: "It's more likely for a manager to be fired for not attempting to do something than for trying, doing it in a sensible way and getting it wrong. But obviously, if they make a habit of it, I'll attend their leaving party." It certainly is tough near the top.

## Hunting heads

BRITAIN'S top companies are preparing themselves for an eventual economic upturn. Sir John Trelawny, of Goddard Kay Rogers, the executive head-hunting consultancy that specialises in salaries of £60,000 plus, says business has increased by 26 per cent since August. He has also detected a trend in the specifications for chief executives away from the cost-cutting chartered accountants and hatchet men, so much in demand in the past two years, to the marketing

## BUSINESS LETTERS

### Tax and the unpaid housewife

From Mr Gordon Nurse

Sir, I refer to the letter from Mr Owen (Business Letters, April 3) commenting on the inequitable consequences of Labour's tax proposals for the couple with two children where the husband is the sole earner with a net income of £35,000 compared with the couple with only one child where both parents are working and together earning the same amount.

Sturdy the solution is to permit couples to opt to split the earnings of the sole earner between them. Better still, allow all married couples the right to apportion their total earned income between them

in such proportions as they may choose, thus enabling them to decide on the most tax efficient formula for their particular circumstances.

This would not only remove the inequitable effect of a system which will be made worse if Labour's proposals are implemented, but would go some way to enable the couples who wished it to give tangible recognition to both the particular family and society in general of the unpaid housewife.

Yours faithfully,  
GORDON NURSE,  
11 Old Square,  
Lincoln's Inn, WC2.

### Consider London

From Mr Robert Hurst

Sir, Although I applaud the candidacies of London and Frankfurt for the location of the proposed European Central Bank (April 3), the powers that be should not forget that one reason put forward for not locating the proposed Community Trade Marks Office (CTMO) in England or Germany is that we have the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and Germany has the European Patent Office. In other words, no longer feels the need for a heavyweight backer. He adds that because partners were tied in by shareholdings — they retained 25 per cent — the firm still has its old partnership team in place. He refuses to say how the buy-out price compares with what ScanBank paid, but insists that the Scandinavians have no grounds for complaint. "They've not had a tremendous return," he says ambiguously, "but we've been profitable throughout." By comparison with other people who bought securities firms, they've done pretty well. Sounds like Hall has done pretty well, too.

Yours faithfully,  
R. A. HURST,  
DJ Freeman,  
43 Fetter Lane, EC4.

### Bank charges

From Mrs B. Woodcock

Sir, My husband opened a small business account with National Westminster Bank in January 1991, with free banking for one year. In November last, we telephoned the bank and were informed the free period was extended to March 1992. We have now received a letter telling us charges will be applied from June, at £14 per quarter and 99p per entry.

In the bank's literature of December 1991, small business charges were £6 per quarter, plus 64p per entry. How on earth can the bank justify such increases when inflation is approximately 4 per cent?

Our turnover was £32,000 last year, and the account has been constantly in credit by approximately £2,000. Is it any wonder the small businessman is suffering at the hands of such dictatorial actions? Can these rises really be justified?

The bank's literature carries the slogan: "We're here to make life easier!"  
Yours faithfully,  
BARBARA WOODCOCK,  
43 Fetter Lane, EC4.

## United Friendly Group plc

### RESULTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1991

- Dividend for the year increased by 20%.
- After tax profits of £16.4 million up 13%.
- Life profits improve to £10.7 million up 15%.
- New life annual premiums of £20.6 million.
- General business underwriting loss improved to £4.0 million from £5.0 million.

	1991 £m	1990 £m
Premiums — Life	165.8	155.8
— General	71.7	60.7
Life business profits	10.7	9.3
General branch underwriting loss	(4.0)	(5.0)
Investment income and other profits	13.4	14.5
Profit attributable to shareholders	15.6	14.5
Dividend per share	12.30p	10.25p
Earnings per share	20.20p	18.14p

The board recommends the payment of a final dividend of 8.10p per share to be paid on 29 May 1992 to shareholders on the register at the close of business on 8 May 1992. The notice for the annual general meeting to be held on 8 May 1992 and the 1991 annual report and accounts will be sent to shareholders on 14 April 1992. Copies of the annual report may be obtained from the Secretary.

United Friendly Group plc, 42 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 9HE  
Telephone: 071-828 5644 Fax: 071-261 9077

## THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

Mid	Offer	+/-	Y/E	Mid	Offer	+/-	Y/E	Mid	Offer	+/-	Y/E	Mid	Offer	+/-	Y/E	
ABBEY UNIT TRUST MANAGERS				CAPE JAMESON UNIT TRUST				LAS UNIT TRUST MANAGERS				PROLIFIC UNIT TRUST				
BO Holdings Ltd, London EC2R 5AS	717573	0.646	+ 0.02	CVI 190, 0203 55 9231				MANAGERS				MANAGERS				
Master Fund	50.48	64.34	+ 0.12	E14 RCL 071 955 3050, Dorking 071 855 2955				Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	
International	50.48	64.34	+ 0.12	CVI Growth	247.70	241.00	- 0.45	- 0.3%	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05
Capital Gp	50.48	64.34	+ 0.12	CVI Growth	247.70	241.00	- 0.45	- 0.3%	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05
Global Gp	50.48	64.34	+ 0.12	CVI Growth	247.70	241.00	- 0.45	- 0.3%	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05
Edwards Growth	52.13	55.45	+ 0.17	CVI Growth	247.70	241.00	- 0.45	- 0.3%	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05
High Yield	16.00	18.00	+ 0.10	CVI Growth	247.70	241.00	- 0.45	- 0.3%	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05
Worldwide Fund	20.10	22.00	+ 0.08	CVI Growth	247.70	241.00	- 0.45	- 0.3%	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05
Unit Fund	15.00	12.00	+ 0.08	CVI Growth	247.70	241.00	- 0.45	- 0.3%	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05
ABURST MANAGEMENT LTD				CVI Growth	247.70	241.00	- 0.45	- 0.3%	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05
102 Finsbury Circus, London EC2M 7EP	02-24 03570	0.000	+ 0.00	CVI Growth	247.70	241.00	- 0.45	- 0.3%	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05
30 Finsbury Circus, London EC2M 7QQ	071 7573	30.75	+ 0.24	CVI Growth	247.70	241.00	- 0.45	- 0.3%	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05
Amex Gp	30.75	32.54	+ 0.29	CVI Growth	247.70	241.00	- 0.45	- 0.3%	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05
Europ Gp	30.75	32.54	+ 0.29	CVI Growth	247.70	241.00	- 0.45	- 0.3%	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05
Europ Inc	72.41	75.75	+ 0.36	CVI Growth	247.70	241.00	- 0.45	- 0.3%	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05
Europ Inc	72.41	75.75	+ 0.36	CVI Growth	247.70	241.00	- 0.45	- 0.3%	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05	Japan	120.10	120.05	- 0.05
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## Portfolio PLATINUM

From your Portfolio Platinum card check your eight share price movements on this page only. Add them up to give you your overall total and check this against the daily dividend figure. If it matches you have won and you are a winner of the prize money stated. If you win, you can follow the procedure on the back of your card. Always have your card available when claiming. Game rules appear on the back of your card.

No	Company	Group	Date or Date	Price	Yld	No	Yld	Price
1	ADT	Industrial						
2	Blue Circle	Building, Rds						
3	Axon By Ports	Transport						
4	Samuel J	Foods						
5	Weir	Industrial						
6	Devis Newman	Transport						
7	Bourne End	Property						
8	GKN	Industrial						
9	IMI	Industrial						
10	QS Hedges	Drapery, Szs						
11	Stanhope Fps	Property						
12	Independent	Newspaper, Pub						
13	Sakis	Hotels, Caf						
14	P-E Trenor	Electrical						
15	Bowater Inc	Industrial						
16	Cardiff-Schw	Foods						
17	Dixons Cpl	Drapery, Szs						
18	City Centre Rest	Hotels, Caf						
19	Lockers	Motors, Air						
20	Clymed	Industrial						
21	Westec	Building, Rds						
22	BOC	Industrial						
23	CRH	Building, Rds						
24	FR Group	Motors, Air						
25	Rank Org	Industrial						
26	Br Aerospace	Motors, Air						
27	Wimpey G	Building, Rds						
28	Smiths Ind	Industrial						
29	Highland Dist	Drapery, Szs						
30	Medics	Industrial						
31	Nni West	Banks, Disc						
32	Carlson (H)	Transport						
33	BTR	Industrial						
34	Vodofone	Electrical						
35	Crest	Foods						
36	MB-Carrion	Industrial						
37	Enterprise	Oil, Gas						
38	Ungaro	Foods						
39	Next	Drapery, Szs						
40	Witford Wedg	Industrial						
41	Maris Spokes	Drapery, Szs						
42	St Ives Cpl	Paper, Print						
43	BWI	Industrial						
44	Telstar	Industrial						

© Times Newspapers Ltd. Total

Please take into account any minus signs

Weekly Dividend

Please make a note of your daily goals for the weekly dividend of £8,000 in Saturday's newspaper.

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUNDAY
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	--------

Two readers shared the Portfolio Platinum prize yesterday. Mrs J.A. Wild, of Reading, and Mr Jude James, of Lymington, Hampshire, each receive £2,000.

1991/92

High Low Company

Price

+/-

% Yld

# Strong Approach to go one better

**STRONG** Approach, beaten two lengths by Hey Cottage on his last trip to Ascot, looks capable of going one better on his return to the Berkshire course today.

Trained by Alistair Charlton at Stockfield in Northumberland, Strong Approach can land the valuable Bollinger Champagne Novices' Chase in the hands of Jamie Osborne, who also rode him on his previous visit.

Had Hey Cottage not been withdrawn overnight, he would have been meeting Strong Approach on 10lb worse terms. That suggests my selection is not badly handicapped even though he has 11st 8lb to carry.

A line through Hey Cottage appears to give him the opportunity to beat the in-form OK Corral, who has been a revelation since he started chasing as he was only a seller over hurdles.

Last time out at Chepstow, OK Corral beat Hey Cottage by one and a half lengths when receiving 12lb from him.

Yet when Strong Approach was beaten two lengths by Hey Cottage over today's course and distance they carried the same weight.

The fact that the in-form Buck Willow was only a length behind in third place

**MICHAEL PHILLIPS**

that day suggests that there was nothing wrong with the form, even though Tillyland and Rough Quest, the market leaders that day, were disappointments.

Since Norman Conqueror was also a let-down when tailed off at Cheltenham last time, Northern Jinks looks the pick of the remainder.

She was poised to win her third race in succession at Uttoxeter last time before capsizing at the final fence.

Following the victory of Party Politics in the Grand National at Liverpool last

Sunday, Northern Jinks looks

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## RACING

# Arazi passes first test with flying colours

FROM RICHARD EVANS IN PARIS

THE dream lives on. At sunny Saint-Cloud yesterday, Arazi resumed where he left off at Churchill Downs on Breeders' Cup day by winning with an ease and style which suggests he could become a racing legend.

Despite being only 60 per cent fit, according to his trainer, Francois Boutil, the world's top juvenile last year showed that operations to two knees and five months off the racecourse have not dulled his brilliance or speed.

Admittedly, the seven horses which he beat on his seasonal reappearance in the Prix Ommium II are probably not exceptional, but the manner in which he demolished the opposition, combined with the post-race remarks of Steve Cauthen, Boutil and joint-owner Allen Paulson, should make the heart of the racing world beat faster today.

Sedded in sixth place early on, Arazi and Cauthen shimmered past two horses down the back straight before turning left-handed and sweeping into the lead just before the 300-metre pole. The 5-1 on favourite never needed to get out of second gear as he won on the bridge by five lengths.

Cauthen is not a jockey who uses superlatives without reason and so his assessment after riding the "wonder horse" for the first time in public was fascinating.

He likened Arazi to Affirmed, on whom Cauthen won America's triple crown in 1978 — the greatest compliment he could pay.

"I have ridden a lot of good horses but this is the first horse I would start to compare with Affirmed, and he is the best horse I have ridden.

"Potentially, he has got the scope to be a great horse. He is so exciting. With most horses, you know their limitations. This horse is unlimited at the moment. You can't say how far he could go. He could do all sorts of things."

  
Boutil: confident of more improvement

## Katy's Lad on course

THE horses-for-courses system provided the answer to the Barbican Handicap at Pontefract yesterday with Katy's Lad making all the running, partnered by Richard Quinn.

The five-year-old, winning for the third time on the Yorkshire course, is a proven performer when fresh and has now collected three times his seasonal debut.

His trainer, Bryan McMa-

The Kentucky Derby, on May 2, is the next stop for Arazi and Cauthen predicted that "barring bad luck, he should win". He is a best priced 5-4 with William Hill, and that could prove generous in three weeks' time.

"I am not saying the American horses are a bad bunch, but I don't know of anything that stands out. He showed that he could do it last year. I would love to ride him in the Kentucky Derby but I unfortunately won't unless Pat Venezuela gets sick."

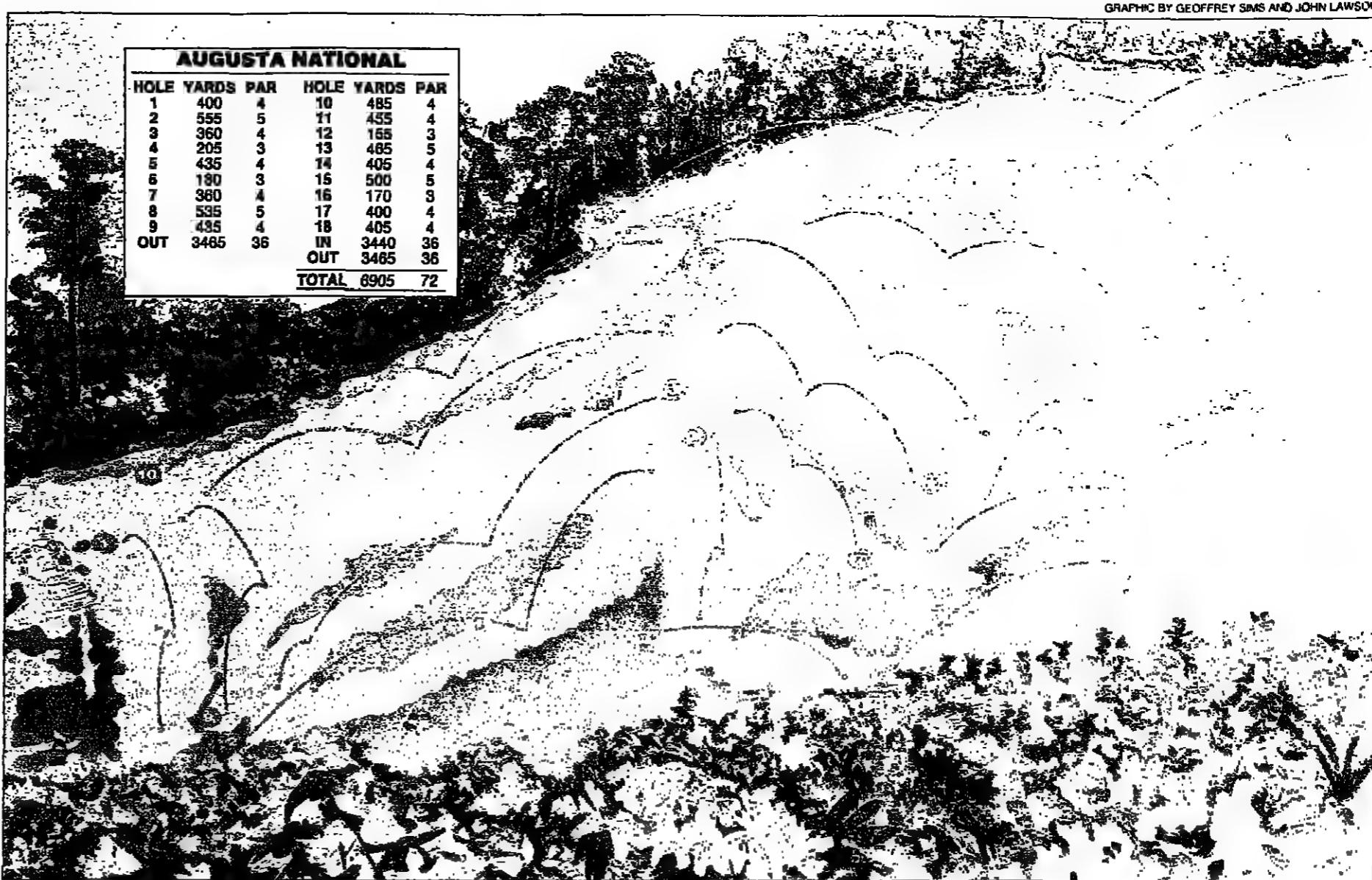
If — and it remains a big if — Arazi then goes for the Derby at Epsom on June 3, Cauthen is confident he will handle the unique course's slopes and undulations. Ladbrokes offer evens with a run, while Coral offer 3-1 without the provision and 4-1 against an historic Derby double.

"I have seen all sorts of horses come round Epsom as long as they are travelling well," Cauthen added.

Paulson, who sold 50 per cent of Arazi to Sheikh Mohammed for around \$9 million before that stunning success in Kentucky last November, clearly wants the horse to go for the triple crown.

Such joy to the eye should come as no surprise because the site that Bobby Jones, arguably the greatest golfer who ever lived, chose for his course was formerly a nursery.

AUGUSTA NATIONAL					
HOLE	YARDS	PAR	HOLE	YARDS	PAR
1	400	4	10	485	4
2	555	5	11	455	3
3	360	4	12	155	3
4	205	3	13	465	4
5	435	4	14	405	4
6	180	3	15	500	5
7	360	4	16	170	3
8	535	5	17	400	4
9	435	4	18	405	4
OUT	3465	36	IN	3440	36
			OUT	3465	36
			TOTAL	6905	72



## A manicured setting for a career to blossom

SPRING dawns deep in the heart of

Dixie with the coming of the Masters (Mitchell Platts writes). The azaleas are ablaze, a kaleidoscope of pink, white and yellow, the dogwoods are in full bloom and the fragrance of the magnolias spices the air at Augusta National.

Such joy to the eye should come as no surprise because the site that Bobby Jones, arguably the greatest golfer who ever lived, chose for his course was formerly a nursery.

The many flowers and trees grown by the Berckmans, the family from whom the land was purchased in 1931, were planted along the fairways laid out by Dr Alister MacKenzie, the renowned Scottish golf course architect. The names of the holes, such as Yellow Jasmine, Fire Thorn and Tea Olive, were taken from the flowering plants or trees.

Yet Augusta National is not simply a horticulturist's delight. It is a course of dreams, drama and de-

mands. To be the Master golfer is to earn the respect of your peers. To become the Master golfer means unravelling the intricacies of a layout that has mesmerised many more than have mastered it.

Yawning bunkers wait for the errant shot. Rae's Creek guards the 12th green, and water extends from just in front of the 16th tee all the way down the left side to the green, which slopes towards the hazard.

The tee (5in), the fairways (7/16in) and the greens (6in) are cut to prescribed lengths. A crew of workers wanders through the stands of towering Georgia pines to collect cones. There is no rough at Augusta; the course is not so much mown as manicured.

Nothing is left to chance. The 12th green, surrounded by trees, is difficult to maintain. So in 1981 an underground heating and cooling system was installed to keep the soil temperature of the green at a

level that promotes root growth and makes the turf less susceptible to disease. Sunlight-imitating grow-lights were also strung over the 12th during last winter.

The tournament will be witnessed only by those privileged to own a ticket. The Masters was first sold out in 1968; the waiting list was closed 12 years later with 5,000 names. It is calculated that the last person on the list will need to wait 50 years to get in.

## Daly must clean up his act in Augusta

FROM MITCHELL PLATTS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT, IN AUGUSTA, GEORGIA

JOHN Daly will test the ingenuity of officials if he becomes the 56th winner of the coveted green jacket here on Sunday.

Tradition is a byword at the Masters and the first obligation of the new champion is to be interviewed on live television by the chairman of Augusta National. The problem is that Frank Chirkinian, the head of CBS golf, is furious that Daly uttered a four-letter word in a live interview earlier this season.

Daly, speaking through an interpreter, said: "During the winter the horse gained in strength. He had a long time off and I was a bit worried about him after his operation, but in the last two weeks he has shown himself to be how he was before. Despite the worries he has come through very well. After this race he will improve another 30 per cent."

### Saint-Cloud details

Going soft  
PRDX OMNIUM II (field: 34-0 colts: £12,333; 1m): 1, ARAZI (S. Cauthen); 2, Supermac (D. Boutil); 3, R. McManus (C. Asmussen); ALSO RAN: Volkers (4m); St. Basm (5m); Custer Ball (6m); Akito (7m); Carson Bay (8m); 8 ran: NR; Take Risks; F. Boutil; St. Basm; Custer Ball; Volkers (8m); St. Basm (8m); 1st: 1.30; 1.10, 1.10, 1.10; DR: 0.80; 1m: 48.00 sec.

if he wants to drink a beer or two, or more, it is his choice; and if he gets tangled in a paternity suit, as he did, that is his business.

But as the US PGA champion, and as a player who has captured the imagination of all of the United States, he does have a duty to be prepared to play to the best of his ability at all times and to conduct himself in public in the manner befitting a champion.

Arnold Palmer, whose name is synonymous with integrity, said: "John Daly is a man who set the world of golf on its ear last August. I hope he knows and understands how much responsibility has been put on him by his winning the PGA championship in the manner he did."

"He can do so much for the game, maybe more than any of us have ever done or ever

done." If he wants to drink a beer or two, or more, it is his choice; and if he gets tangled in a paternity suit, as he did, that is his business.

He doesn't have to learn how to hit it high; that's how he hits it. He doesn't have to learn how to hit it far; that's how he hits it. Those are the things you need at Augusta."

Daly can open his shoulders at Augusta and smash the ball a mile. He can reduce par fives, like the 13th and 15th, to a drive and an eight-iron.

What he might not possess is the science to survive on and around the most severe greens in the world. If he does, the Masters title might be his, and that would mean everything.

"I'm the kind of guy who lives in my heart," he said. "Money is just paper. If having a heart is being rich, then I'm rich."

Comparisons with Nicklaus are inevitable. "I've heard them already and it's the craziest thing," he said.

"What I would like is the chance to talk to Jack about how to handle all the things going on off the course. I hope he knows and understands how much responsibility has been put on him by his winning the United States PGA championship last August."

Daly's deeds, on and off the course, have been well documented. His casino losses at Sun City were reputed to be \$30,000 (about £17,000) more than the \$90,000 he was paid.

It was reported that he had a drink problem. In Jamaica, he signed for the wrong score in the Johnnie Walker world championship and left early with \$50,000 for his troubles.

At the Australian Masters, he forgot to sign his card.

If Daly wants to throw \$50,000 on a spin of roulette wheel, that is his prerogative;

he always has been a gambler.

"As for the Masters, it's always been my dream to play here although, realistically, I don't think I have that good a chance of winning."

Jack Nicklaus, who has arranged to play his final practice round with Daly today, disagrees. He said: "You couldn't have ever had a golf course made for a man's

game more than Augusta is for John Daly. He doesn't have to learn how to play right to left; that's how he plays.

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Daly can open his shoulders at Augusta and smash the ball

## Support increased for Norster and Davies

# Welsh rebuild to give players a stronger platform

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

ROBERT Norster and Alan Davies, now confirmed as team manager and coach to Wales up to the 1995 World Cup, will find themselves the focal point of a completely revamped management structure designed to restore Wales to the plateau of international rugby, rather than the valleys the country has occupied of late.

The Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) general committee meets tomorrow for the second time in eight days to discuss elements of the development plan drawn up by Jeff Young, the WRU's technical director. The first phase of Young's plan, already approved, is an interlinked structure directed by a new national player development committee, accountable to the union's general committee.

The most important facet Young, once an international hooker, has identified is the use of playing resources: the need to identify the most talented players and develop their skills for the benefit of the national side, reviving thereby public enthusiasm for the national game.

"We needed a national player development committee with the necessary expertise and authority to plan, direct, evaluate and monitor all the administrative, organisational and technical elements associated with the effective performance of national senior squads," Young said. "The great thing is to have time available during the domestic season to prepare squads properly."

"Part of the forward planning is to minimise the conflict of loyalties for players, by

integrating representative and club fixtures." Already the new committee recognises the benefit of a Heineken League with divisions formed of no more than ten clubs, as it is now, rather than as it will be next season, enlarged to 12-club divisions, and has expressed the hope that there will be a reversion to ten-club divisions by 1993-4.

A complete representative programme has been drawn up for senior, development and under-21 squads, each with its own management team. As in Australasia, the team manager will operate in an organisational capacity, leaving selection and coaching to three other individuals. A four-year rolling cycle will take the national side on an important tour at two-year intervals, the development squad on an annual tour and B and under-21 tours at appropriate intervals.

There is, for example, the possibility of sending members of the national management team to Australia this summer, when Scotland and New Zealand are on tour there, given that Australia are Wales' next international opponents.

Norster acknowledges that he could not take on the team manager's role without the support of his employers, Chartered Trust, and that his career with the finance company will be effectively on hold over the next three years. Davies, who runs his own marketing and leisurewear company, is moving lock, stock and barrel from Nottingham to Wales. Like the development agencies at the heads of the valleys, they are hoping to restore a smile to the scarred face of the land.

**Norster: career on hold**

## ANC puts end to visa deadlock

BY CHRIS THAU

AN INTERVENTION by the African National Congress (ANC) shadow minister for sport, Steve Tshwete, has broken a deadlock over visas for six South African players who have been invited to play for the World XV as part of the New Zealand rugby union centenary celebrations.

While Tshwete was in Australia and New Zealand for the cricket World Cup, Muleki George, the chairman of the National Olympic and Sports Congress (Nos), the sporting arm of the ANC, wrote to the governing bodies of Australia, New Zealand, France and England demanding a ban on the planned tours to and from the Republic.

He claimed the development programme launched by the South African Rugby Football Union (Sarfu) last weekend was a smokescreen to provide cover for the international aspirations of the white establishment.

George also said that the Springbok badge would cease to be the symbol of South African sport, and would be replaced by the protea, an indigenous flower.

George's assertions were both denied. Danie Craven, the Sarfu president, said millions of rands had been spent to develop the game in deprived areas, and the Nos

chairman, Sam Ramsamy, said that a decision on the Springbok badge will be taken this month.

But in New Zealand, George's letter caused such concern that the rugby football union chairman, Eddie Tonks, met the prime minister to explain the background to the problem, and the New Zealanders were unwilling to issue visas to the South African players without the approval of an ANC official.

Nothing moved until Tshwete picked up the phone and provided the required guarantees for the visas to be issued.

Among the South African players to be invited is Naas Botha, the stand-off half. Simon Poldevin, the Australian flanker, has also been asked to join the party.

Brian Lohore, the coach of the world team, which will play three games against New Zealand, said the two had been approached after Michael Lynagh, of Australia, and Peter Winterbottom, of England, withdrew.

Lohore has secured the Scottish scrum half, Andy Nichol, in place of his original choices from England, Dewi Morris and Richard Hill. The three matches are in Christchurch, on April 18, Wellington, on April 22 and Auckland, on April 25.

## TENNIS

### Cash seeks entry to Wimbledon

Tokyo: Pat Cash is to test his theory that former champions should automatically be granted wild cards at Wimbledon by requesting one for the championships this year (Barry Wood writes).

Although he will prepare for Wimbledon at Beckenham and Queen's, Cash's tennis interests are restricted to weekend games next month for a second division German league club in Hamburg. He is building a musical production studio at his London home, and is hoping to include Yannick Noah in a laser music show set to tennis.

Meanwhile, Monique Javer reached the quarter-finals of the Japan Open with a 6-4, 7-5 win over Catarina Lindqvist.

Results, page 31

## Davidson sees his chance

BY JENNY MACARTHUR

BRUCE Davidson, of the United States, riding last year's winning horse, The Irishman II, will be one of the leading overseas contenders for the Mitsubishi Motors Trophy at this year's Badminton Horse Trials from May 7 to 10.

The trials, which this year have a first prize of £20,000 and a prize fund of £100,000 — a record in the sport — have attracted 115 entries from ten countries. New Zealand's entry includes Mark Todd, the dual Olympic champion, Master Craftsman. She, like Mary Thomson with King William, needs a good performance at Badminton to secure her Olympic team place.

The European champion, Ian Stark, Karen Dixon (née Straker) and Richard Walker have all been excused Badminton with their top horses after their gold-medal wins.

Davidson, the winner of the world championships in 1974 and 1978, has long nursed an ambition to win

the world's premier three-day event. Since finishing runner-up in 1982 on JJ Babu, the closest he has come is sixth in 1986 — again on JJ Babu. In The Irishman, whom he hopes to ride at the Olympic Games, Davidson, aged 42, has a horse to match his experience. The 13-year-old gelding has completed Badminton four times.

The British challenge is led by Virginia Leng, a former world and triple European champion, on her 1989 Badminton winner, Master Craftsman. She, like Mary Thomson with King William, needs a good performance at Badminton to secure her Olympic team place.

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MODERN TIMES  
Glamorous  
and sordid  
lives of  
Mafia women



# LIFE & TIMES

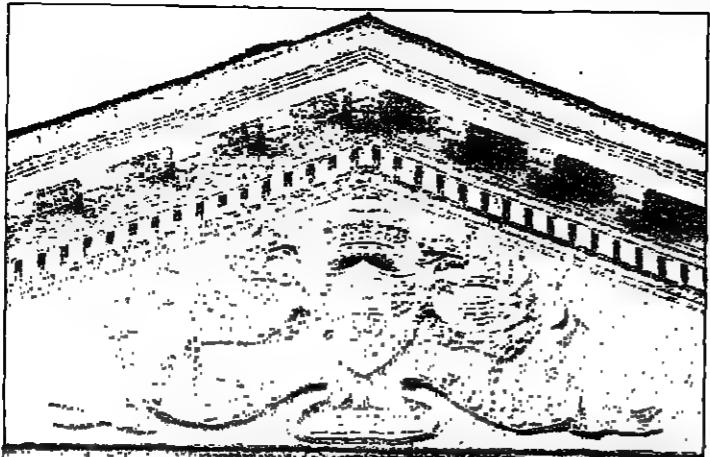
WEDNESDAY APRIL 8 1992

A rough  
ride for  
home  
captain.

SCIENCE  
Quarrying:  
threat to  
the British  
countryside



## The marks of Spencer's reign



The Spencer family motto, 'God defend the right'

**George Hill considers the inheritance of the 9th Earl Spencer and whether his management of Althorp will be less controversial than his father's**

**A** gilded nest, Lord St John of Fawsley called it in his address at the funeral service. Gilded past all recognition, and denuded of its less gaudy and most precious treasures to pay for the glitter, critics complain.

The 8th Earl Spencer, who was buried among his ancestors last week, has left a more controversial mark than any of them on Althorp, the great house which has been the home of the Spencers for nearly 500 years. His death closes a bitter family quarrel, but the changes made during his ownership will be argued over as long as the house survives.

Exactly how drastic they were, and what the financial implications may be, is still known to few. Even the new Lord Spencer and his advisers may not be in a position to work out immediately what options are open to them after the activities, at once flamboyant and surreptitious, of the last earl and his countess.

For the present, quite naturally, public comment from the family has been minimal. The house will remain closed to the public for mourning until after Easter, but there is every intention of reopening it again afterwards.

Althorp's contents — inherited, bought and set in order by the present earl's grandfather, a notable collector and connoisseur — were so exceptionally fine that all the erosions of the last 17 years have still left the house rich in paintings and furnishings. Van Dycks, Gainsboroughs, furniture, silver, archives, and solid-gold ice pails have gone, but other Van Dycks and Gainsboroughs, several Rubenses, and portraits of three generations of Spencers by Reynolds still apparently hang on its walls. *War and Peace*, the finest of all Althorp's Van Dycks, is still in its place.

Some in the saleroom world hint that matters are getting so bad financially that Althorp may yet have to be sold out right. This would be a final irony, when its former master and mistress were so strenuous in their claims that their sales and refurbishments (the sum of £2 million) were necessary to save a house structurally and financially in precarious straits.

The real state of affairs ought to be far less desperate, given the new earl's evident commitment to the integrity of the house, and the differences between his financial

position and his father's. The house now has an estate worth £50m behind it, put in trust for the present earl by his grandfather, to escape inheritance tax. This was not available to his father. But it may be true that the sales of treasures worth millions were little or no help in securing the house and its remaining collections. In the complex network of tax bargains which tends to accumulate around a great house today, it is quite possible to sell in such a way that tax liabilities can swallow up the gains.

Some of the sales were certainly odd. Instances abound of works of art of the highest quality sold on to the market and being sold for a fraction of the price they would have fetched with more publicity. A single painting by Andrea Sacchi sold to a dealer for £40,000 was promptly sold on to the Metropolitan Museum for £270,000. The device of private treaty sale (enabling objects to be sold to the state with tax advantages, on terms allowing them to remain in the houses they have been associated with) was mysteriously ignored several times.

As for the refurbishments, there are two views about that. Lovers of antiques who watched the house change under the hands of Johnny Spencer and his wife Raine speak with anguish of what has been done.

From one perspective, the story of Althorp is a cautionary tale for owners about the dangers of some bad advice, and a warning for legislators who seek to create a framework capable of protecting great houses without laying prohibitive restrictions on owners. It raises the question of whether an Englishman's home is still his castle, if it happens actually to be a castle.

In itself, there is nothing unusual or shocking about owners of great houses making changes, nor about their selling chattels. Most of us like to leave a personal mark on our homes; some of us find ourselves in financial tight corners where change can only be for the worse, and disposals are a kind of theft from a hoard which belongs to us all. They tend not to ask for whom the auctioneer's hammer falls: they are convinced that it falls on their own

heritage. Yet for centuries owners have high-handedly discarded their ancestors' work, to replace it with the fashion of their own time. It is proverbial that the place to look for a house's best pieces of furniture is in the attic, where they will have been consigned in the last refurbishment, or the last but one.

Without this process, with its gains and its losses, many of the country's finest schemes of decoration and architectural second thoughts would never have happened.

**N**ot until the last century did owners begin to show much sense of historical perspective in the way they treated their inheritances. In this century historical respectfulness has gained ground steadily, and today's prevailing wisdom favours a level of deference towards the craftsmanship of the past that ancestral squires would have found pusillanimous.

"We value the patina of age today," says Peter Sinclair, the editor of *Historic Houses* magazine. "We have grown used to an atmospheric but really rather faded image of the country house. It gives us a shock to see an old picture-frame newly gilded, even though it looks much more like it would have done when it was new."

Is it conceivable that Raine Spencer's refurbishments may one day be seen as a rare and admirable instance of self-confidence in the timid late 20th century? Even if it is inconceivable, how far did she have a right to transform the house she found, to suit her comfort and express her taste? It is undeniable that much of the hostility she aroused had more to do with

snobbish disease than aesthetics.

Lord Shelburne, the president of the Historic Houses Association (vulgarily known as the stately-home owners' trade union) strongly affirms that change is natural in a great house. "If you look at the evolution of all these places, nearly every owner has done something to leave his mark. It is healthy and good that everything is not stultified by too many controls. But if owners are free to make changes, sometimes they will do things which are not to everybody's taste."

As landed property has become a less reliable revenue earner, he says, owners have found it harder to make ends meet. Since 1980 agricultural prices have halved in real terms. Grants for repairs from English Heritage have halved in just three years, he claims.

"If there is too little income, then either you must generate revenue in new ways, which can be difficult, or sell something from time to time to clear down the debt — or sell the whole damned lot in one go," Lord Shelburne says. "It can be a nightmare to own one of these things. There is a real fear now that the privately-owned heritage may disappear in a few generations."

Lord Shelburne means to ask the next government for two relief measures for his members. One is to relieve repairs to all listed buildings of the burden of VAT, through zero rating. The other is for funds run by independent trustees, into which owners have irrevocably transferred assets for the maintenance of their houses, to be exempted from income tax and capital gains tax.

These reforms might not have

seemed much to the point to the 8th earl and his countess. Their bizarre actions are only comprehensible in the context of the framework bequeathed by the 7th earl. Their protestations about the burden of death duties are puzzling in view of the reported preoccupation of the 7th earl, the present earl's grandfather, with the protection of the family inheritance.

He was well aware of the inheritance laws. These have made provision since the last century for property and items of outstanding value, if open to the public, to pass tax-free from father to son under "conditional exemption". The exemption is "conditional" because if the items are sold at a later stage, the tax has to be paid after all.

The inference must be that the earl and countess chose to forego exemptions to leave their hands free to sell. Whether they gained or lost by this is a secret that may never be known, except to the family and the taxman.

Substantial tax liabilities may still be outstanding. Some items were sold at a fraction of their real value, apparently to avoid the publicity of an auction or private treaty sale.

At the same time, revenue-raising efforts at the house were geared up to an intensity which many onlookers found degrading. The house was advertised like a hotel ("Weddings, 21st birthdays, business or private lunches and dinners our specialty..."), and a Japanese property company was given permission to use the name "Royal Spencer" for a chain of golf clubs.

In his concern to minimise inheritance duties, the 7th earl arranged for the bulk of the estate to pass to his grandson, while

leaving Althorp itself to his son. Under the ancient system of inheritance misleadingly known as primogeniture, everything was destined eventually to come to the present earl, the youngest of his father's four children.

The last earl inherited the house, and the responsibilities that went with it, but was unable to make calls on the estate for its upkeep, nor for his other children. He used to speak publicly of his concern to make provision for the two of his three daughters who had not had the luck to marry into royalty.

His actions suggest a basiful and naive attempt to provide for them without resorting to the major sale he knew would have grieved his own father. When questioned last year about his family's disagreements over the sales, he replied in evident distress that his children were ungrateful. If his efforts to provide for them are the key to the

story, it is a sad irony that he blundered into a predicament where he angered them, squandered for a fraction of its value much of the inheritance his father had entrusted to him, and called down a greater deluge of hostile and derisive publicity than any other course of action could have done.

As Lord Shelburne observes, it can be a nightmare to own one of these things.

INSIDE	
Arts	2.3
Women	4.5
Science	6
Property	7.8
Law report	10
TV, radio	12
TOMORROW	12
The election: day of reckoning	



The new Earl and Countess Spencer come to an Althorp denuded of many of its great treasures but with an estate worth £50 million which the late earl could not use

## Driving Mr Fixit well round the S-bend

### SINGLE LIFE

**Lynne Truss on the thrill of calling up a handyman or two**



in panic. "Nothing." "You said 'Oops!'" "No I didn't." "You did." The trouble is that you start to identify with the boyfriend's tussle with his ego, which is getting out of hand. And strangely, no amount of hand-wringing or helpful why-don't-you-call-a-few-days-noises make his tussle any easier. "It's just this last hole," he says grimly, after a day of constant drilling, and you peek aghast into a room filled with

brick dust and a wall that has been drilled so many times it resembles pegboard. The helpful suggestion, "Hey, let's forget those silly old shelves, and give the books to the Russians!" fails to lift the gloom.

Which is why I prefer the professional option. This is a simple business arrangement. If the bloke has problems with the job, his ego is his own affair. Recently, a rather lugubrious gas engineer came to remove the old pump from my central heating, and when he said "Oh dear, oh dear, it won't budge an inch," and "Do you know, when you can get one side to come loose, the other side always sticks," I just said "Really?" and carried on watching daytime TV. Afterwards, when he discovered his car had been towed away from outside my house, I didn't identify with his wounded pride. I just drove him to the car pound and told him the fine was usually about 80 quid.

Left to my own resources, I admit I do sometimes "get a man in" when it is not strictly necessary. I once called a heating engineer when the only problem was that I had turned the thermostat the wrong way; similarly I recently called out a bemused Zanussi man merely to clean the filter on my washing machine. A live-in partner

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**LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA:** The orchestra continues its north-east tour this week with a series of concerts. Tickets are by the bright young American conductor Kent Nagano, and featuring the dancing of Rudolf Nureyev. The programme commences the suite from Bartók's ballet, *The Wooden Prince*, together with Beethoven's *Symphony No 5* and Prokofiev's *Symphony No 6*, which will be repeated tomorrow. Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, Barbican, and on Friday, at Bob Brady's Warehouse, Barnet-in-Furness. City Hall, Newcastle (091-261 2606), 7.45pm.

**COUPLES:** The Scottish Ballet presents the company premiere of Peter Wright's fine production, the first time the Coppélia story has been accepted by principal ballerina Naozumi Ohata dancing opposite Robert Hampton. Playhouse Theatre, 15 Greenlane Place, Edinburgh (031-557 2692), Tonight-Sat, 7.30pm, mats tomorrow, 2pm and Sat, 2.30pm.

**ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA:** Mark Elder conducts David Pountney's long-running production of Verdi's *Don Carlos*, an opera of political and of conflict between personal and political demands in 16th-century Spain. The cast includes Pauline Plowright as Elizabeth, Edmund Bathory & Don Llana, and Sophie Ellis-Bextor. Conductor Howard is the role of King Philip, and Richard Van Allan tends to the Grand Inquisitor. Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (071-836 3161), tonight, Sat, 6.15pm.

**REMBRANDT:** Unlike most Old Masters, Rembrandt has been news for

#### TODAY'S EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Kari Knight

the last decade, owing largely to the success of the Rembrandt exhibition, which has been demolishing large numbers of once-eccentric Rembrandts into the work of pupils and followers. This show comes to London from Berlin and Amsterdam, and consists of 46 paintings accepted by the committee, plus 12 more accepted by the committee, with background material to elucidate the context. National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, WC2 (071-832 3321), Daily, 10am-6pm (Wed, Fri to 9pm). Until May 24.

**PLAISTOW:** The Gate's "Beyond the Pale" continues with Fisher Campbell's drama of a man pressed between the end of military dictatorship and the return of civilian rule. The play is previewing and opens on Saturday. The Gate, 11 Pennington Road, W1 (071-582 1250), Today, 7.30pm, tomorrow, Sat, 7.30pm.

**SIRUKU:** This production by the creators of *Le Tombe*, is a South African song-and-dance drama of a man's search for father and homeland. Opening night.

Shakespeare's, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (071-494 5040), Tonight, Thurs, 8pm, Fri, Sat, 8.30pm.

**WHITE OAK DANCE PROJECT:** The renowned Russian classical dancer Michael Baryshnikov has traded in his

#### THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of current theatre showing in London

■ Seats at matinee only

■ Some seats available

■ Seats at all prices

the top, in the world of rock bands and packed with Stones songs, Boulevard, St Paul's Court, off Peter Street, W1 (071-437 2661 until 2pm, mat. Thurs, 3pm, Sat, 4pm, 12.30pm, 1.30pm, 2pm, 4pm, 5pm, Sat, 5pm, 8pm).

■ **THE DARK RIVER:** Accomplished revival of Rodney Ackland's 1937 drama, naivety and nostalgia in an England of the 1930s. The Orange Tree, Orange Tree, Clarence Street, Richmond (081-940 3633), Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat. Sat, 4pm, 16.30pm.

■ **DEATH AND THE MAIDEN:** After Stevenson, Michael Byrne, Bill Paterson superbly recreate the political drama Ben plays in 1981. Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (071-836 5121), Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat. Thurs, 3pm, Sat, 4pm, 12.30pm.

■ **DIGGING FOR FIRE:** A dramedy from Ireland by Declan Hughes, a savage indictment but upliftingly played. Bush, Shepherd Bush Green, W1 (071-743 3388), Mon-Sat, 8pm, 1.30pm.

■ **ELIMESSEY/MARY:** Three generations of clever women, expert in spelling but emotionally muddled. Refreshing play by Lee Blessing, subduely acted.

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# Conductors in search of tickets

London's top orchestras are fighting for supremacy, and Richard Morrison is keeping score

The present London orchestral season has been the most worrying for a decade. Gone are the signs of the brave new adventure promised when Nicholas Snowman first came to the South Bank as artistic director. The recession has forced all orchestras to play for safety. Brahms is back, Brünnhilde banished.

Even so, there have been dismal box office figures. The BBC Symphony Orchestra's Festival Hall concerts have averaged 18 percent of capacity so far this season. John Drummond, now departed from the BBC Controller of Music job, could have put the entire audience for most concerts in a village hall.

Meanwhile, the four independent London orchestras go on trying to woo the same punters with the same programmes, played (except for the Barbican-based London Symphony Orchestra) in the same venue the Festival Hall. But this is all supposed to change in September, when the London Philharmonic begins its fifth year as the South Bank's resident orchestra.

In theory, the residency will give the LPO and its music director, Franz Welser-Möst, the edge over the Philharmonia (conducted by Giuseppe Sinopoli) and the Royal Philharmonic (under Vladimir Ashkenazy). The LPO's contract guarantees that its rehearsals will be in the Festival Hall, and gives it first choice of dates and repertoire. The idea is that the orchestra will then enjoy such wonderful conditions that it will develop into a world-class ensemble.

So is all set for a golden age at the Festival Hall? The answer is no. All is set for a backstage power struggle that will be bloody even by London orchestral standards. It will be fought on two fronts. First, there is a feeling that the South Bank is trying to soften the implications of the LPO's residency for the other orchestras. In particular the Philhar-



The South Bank's conductors (left to right): Giuseppe Sinopoli of the Philharmonia, Franz Welser-Möst of the LPO and Vladimir Ashkenazy of the Royal Philharmonic

nia has been given special treatment for playing "difficult" programmes — or at least, that is how the LPO might see it.

In the coming months the LPO, which once attempted to take over the Philharmonia, will use every mechanism its contract allows to force the Philharmonia away from prime dates and repertoire. The RPO is seen as less of a threat. It has had its grant cut this season, and suffered the resignation of its experienced managing director, Ian Mackay.

Second, the question of "who runs the show?" will surely soon assume significance. If the ambitious young Welser-Möst were in charge of any other Philharmonic in the world... there would be no question that he would have carte blanche to do whatever

he wanted in his own hall. On the South Bank, however, Snowman's position as artistic director implies a confused command, or perhaps one general too many. Then there are the wishes of Ashkenazy and Sinopoli to be considered.

Why, though, should there not be several orchestras competing for London trade, as there have been for 40 years? Is competition not good for consumers? Why is the LPO management, led by John Willan, so intent on squeezing its rivals?

The answer is that the LPO has looked around the world at the orchestras it most wishes to emulate, and found in each case a close bond between orchestra and hall. Vienna and Musikverein; Berlin and Philharmonie; Amsterdam and Concertgebouw; and now Birmingham and Symphony Hall: these are perfect mar-

riages. Only in London is a kind of loose-living ménage à quatre offered as a substitute for monogamy.

The point was emphasised a fortnight ago, as the LPO completed its round-the-world tour with two well-received concerts in New York. Here was an opportunity to compare the circumstances of the LPO and the orchestra in whose hall it was playing: the New York Philharmonic.

New York's "John Willan" is Deborah Borda, appointed last year to run the New York Phil. She admits that she is competing primarily against other forms of entertainment, not other orchestras. "We were concerned that the group not coming to our concerts was the 30- to 45-year-olds with disposable income — people who used to be called yuppies. In New York there is intense competition for the leisure

and theatre. In London we too are competing against all these, but also in the Festival Hall against two identical organisations. The way that Deborah can talk about her initiatives is fantastically refreshing. But she doesn't have to worry about doing this Beethoven symphony or booking that conductor before the opposition has the same idea.

Borda's solution has been to use her greatest asset: a hall permanently available to the orchestra. For instance, she has launched "Rush-hour Concerts" of accessible music on weekdays at 6.45, followed by "meet the orchestra" sessions. "We call them youth concerts for adults; they break down barriers between the Philharmonia and these potential audiences."

In this respect, New York music-making is miles ahead of London, as Willan points out. "The fundamental difference is that the New York Phil is competing for the leisure dollar against cinemas, restaur-

ante and theatre. In London we too are competing against all these, but also in the Festival Hall against two identical organisations. The way that Deborah can talk about her initiatives is fantastically refreshing. But she doesn't have to worry about doing this Beethoven symphony or booking that conductor before the opposition has the same idea.

So not everything in New York is to be envied. Similarly, it would be wrong to believe that the only problem in London is the relationship between the LPO and the South Bank. If the LPO is to rival Vienna, its playing must improve and its conductor must mature. Nevertheless, Willan believes that the hall is the key. "If I could take one thing from New York it would be the whole relationship between the orchestra's executive team and the space in which it plays. Until we crack that in London we won't be going forward one millimetre."

Borda has her problems. Every professional orchestra in America is running a deficit: the result of over-ambitious

## ARTS BRIEF

### Healthy appetite

BARELY pausing to lick his lips after polishing off the Best Actor Oscar for his portrayal of the cannibalistic psychiatrist in *Silence of the Lambs*, Anthony Hopkins will now add a starring role in the film version of Kazuo Ishiguro's novel, *The Remains of the Day*, to his menu for 1992. The film, which will be adapted by Harold Pinter from the acclaimed novel, is to be directed by Chris Menaul (of *Law & Order's* *Prisoner Suspect*).

When the film was first talked about, it was expected that last year's Oscar-winner Jeremy Irons would star and Mike Nichols would direct. Nichols has now decided to produce the film instead. Shooting begins in the summer, after Hopkins has completed work on *The Innocents*, to be directed by John Schlesinger.

#### Postponed

BRITAIN's crowded summer festival schedule has been eased slightly, but in unfortunate circumstances. The Sheffield Chamber Music Festival — the second most famous annual event to take place in the Crucible Theatre — has been cancelled this year. Peter Cropper, leader of the Lindsay String Quartet (the festival's mainstay) has suffered a mild heart attack, and since he was involved in 14 of the 29 events, the whole has now been transferred to May 1993. However, the world premiere of Sir Michael Tippett's *Fifth Quartet* will go ahead this year, on May 9.



Tippett: his new quartet premieres on May 9

#### Last chance . . .

THE Commonwealth Institute, in Kensington, London W8 (071-603 4535) is coordinating its programmes this year under the general heading of "New Worlds", marking the "European New World of 1992" and the anniversary of Columbus's first voyage to America. A show called "History and Identity" has seven painters from Britain's African and Asian communities reflecting on their dual heritage. Some are strongly political, while others are cheerful and unashamedly nostalgic. It continues until Sunday.

## DANCE PREVIEW

### Will we tire of the dance?

One Russian ballet company is already in Britain, and another arrives next week. Debra Craine questions a growing trade



Natalya Bessmertnova: "I think that there are too many Russian companies, but the Bolshoi shouldn't worry"

similar to one the company undertook here in 1990. And now comes news that the full Bolshoi, with 170 dancers, is to make its first visit to Britain since 1989 with an "arena" season next January at the Albert Hall.

Yet despite the glut, the public's appetite for Russian offerings remains enormous. Trevor Mitchell, Moscow City Ballet's British tour manager, says the 70-strong company has had no trouble finding a sell-out audience at every stop on its tour. "We had the most amazing success in Swansea; we had to add two extra performances," he says.

"Birmingham was sold out; it was the first time they had had a major ballet company there. Inverness sold out the day tickets went on sale; in Carlisle we performed in a large gym which had been converted and still sold out. In Cambridge we

sold out the orchestra in the bar and pipe them through and yet we were sold out. At Wimbledon we were busing at the seats with people."

"We are packing out everywhere we go. We are going to

venues that English National Ballet and Birmingham Royal Ballet don't normally go to so obviously we are going to attract local audiences and local sponsorship."

The "Stars of the Bolshoi Ballet" tour, which opens on Monday with a royal charity gala at London's Dominion, will also take ballet to venues too small to accommodate the larger companies, although instead of full-length works the troupe will perform the second acts of *Swan Lake* and *Giselle* along with a selection of popular diversions.

The aim of this tour is to perform in many cities where we can't show our big produc-

tion

## TELEVISION REVIEW

### Imagination is a growth area for children

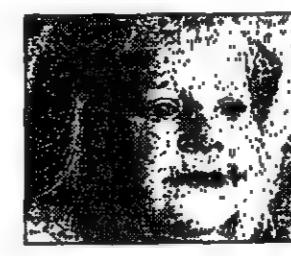
Children's television today is a largely raucous area of activity which, overseen by adults, resembles a ten-year-old's birthday party held in a jelly factory and attended by several pop groups. Thank the good fairy, then, for the arrival of *The Lowdown*, a documentary series for and about children which began on BBC 1 yesterday afternoon.

This has a markedly refreshing approach. First it sounds as if it has at least heard of the Noise Abatement Society. And although it uses animated images as a backdrop for the children's stories, there is mercifully no sign of the multiple-messages so beloved of the BBC's "yool" department, notably via the use of captions which often come street-cornering across the screen.

Part one of *The Lowdown* was called "You've Got a Friend" and dealt with that fascinating prop of many a childhood, the imaginary friend. Happily there were no psychologists to say what it all meant. There were instead children telling us who their friends were and what they did and why they mattered. And there was Alan Ayckbourn to catch a passing adult eye, who talked about professional inspiration from his friend Tim who used to sit beside him at the dinner table.

Imaginary friends appear to be mainly a feminine trait. Most of the children interviewed were girls, unless of course girls are more willing to talk about such matters, boys being notoriously insensitive to all but the gang viewpoint. Some friends demand more than others, and have more demanded of them, a realisation which is good training for adult life. Emma, for instance, is the friend of one little girl and she lives in the bathroom mirror. Emma is only there to be talked to.

Another child has an animal as a friend, but this animal can be all things to all enemies. Sometimes a cat, the



Girl from *The Lowdown*

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PETER BARNARD



The family way: Annette Bening portrays the notorious glamour-seeking gangster's moll Virginia Hill, with Warren Beatty as Bugsy Siegel in his new film *Bugsy*

## Married to the mob

The fleeting glamour in the lives of Mafia women is outweighed by the brutality, Charles Bremner reports

Film stars, an army of reporters and an entourage of glossy gangsters all trooped daily into the Brooklyn court to watch the final act of John Gotti's reign as Godfather of the New York Mafia. However one figure never entered the room: Victoria, his wife of 31 years. According to custom, a Mafia woman's place is the home.

In these times of decadence in the old-time Mob, when ranking "wiseguys" are breaking the ancient codes of honour, dealing drugs, "rating" on their bosses to the FBI and even shooting women, Mrs Gotti and her two daughters stand proudly in their traditional roles as invisible helpmates for their men. While her husband sat for three months in court, depicted in his own recorded words and by his own underboss as a murdering, foul-mouthed dictator of the underworld, Mrs Gotti sat silently in the couple's suburban home with the blinds drawn. She spoke only this weekend when the Don's conviction guaranteed he would never leave prison again. "At least I know that I've had happy years with the man I love," she told a trusted reporter for the *New York Daily News*. "How many women do you know who can really say so?"

One of the couple's two daughters, Vicki Agnelli, 30, echoed her mother in the moments after Gotti's conviction last Thursday for murder and racketeering: "My father is the last of the Mohicans. They don't make men like him any more and they never will. That's the difference between him and everybody else."

Victoria DiGiorgio, dark and petite and now aged 50, unofficially married into the Mob in 1959, when she met John, a worker in New York's garment district who aspired to glory in the *cosa nostra* (Mafia). Her father, an employee in the city sanitation department, was none too pleased at her choice. As Gotti rose through the ranks of the Gambino clan, from street enforcer to feared overlord of the New York underworld, Victoria was the perfect wife, enduring the rigours of

her husband's profession, including brief absences in prison, and above all never asking questions. "I was never permitted to be involved," she told the *New York Daily News*. Her husband may be known to the world as a homicidal chief executive of the *cosa nostra*, a man who could be heard in FBI tapes expressing his organisational credo: "Every time we got a partner that doesn't agree with us, we kill him." But that is not Mrs Gotti's concern. "I'm an old-fashioned woman," she said. "I don't ask him what he does. All I know is, he provides."

Thanks to a spate of memoirs and their Hollywood adaptation, much is now known of the lives of Mafia women, a group which remains among the least liberated in American life. They split into two types. On one side are the wives and sisters whom the soldiers swear to honour in those fabled initiation ceremonies which date back to the rituals of 12th-century Sicily. "Women are sacred," a don could be heard telling four new soldiers in a Connecticut blood ceremony recorded by the FBI and played in court last year. "The only way to get out of that is to die." The other type is the moll, the ornament on the mobster's arm, who has been glorified by Hollywood from pre-war days through to Annette Bening's current screen version of Virginia Hill, the Las Vegas mistress of Bugsy Siegel, portrayed in Warren Beatty's new film *Bugsy*.

Despite Hollywood's fantasies about lethal females such as the hit woman played by Kathleen Turner in *Pizzi's Honour*, a floozy is never accepted as one of the wiseguys. Attracted by the glamour of power, her highest aspiration is merely to sleep with Mr Big and enjoy, for a decade. She recorded conversations with leading figures of the underworld, among them John Gotti. After her heroin-addicted daughter died of Aids, she retreated with her

men but the aura of danger and power is a potent aphrodisiac. Giancana, said Exner, was a better lover than the glamorous young president.

For its fleeting pleasures, life as a Mob moll has always been brutal and sordid. Nothing could better deter star-struck young hopefuls than the story of Artyne Brickman, who was the concubine of hoodlums for four decades. In *Mob Girl: A Woman's Life in the Underworld*, published this month by Simon & Schuster, Ms Brickman tells how, as the daughter

**'I don't ask him what he does. All I know is he provides'**

of a Jewish gangster in the days of Siegel and Meyer Lansky, she fell in love with the image of Virginia Hill after reading a newspaper description of her as "the most successful woman in America".

"In my eyes," says Ms Brickman, "here was a broad that really made it good." After losing her virginity at 14 to an enforcer from the Bonanno clan, Ms Brickman became a "party girl". She carried out sexual favours for the infamous Joe Colombo and hundreds of others. Regularly beaten, raped and scorned, she managed to start a minor gambling business of her own and then exacted her revenge by acting as a police informer for a decade. She recorded conversations with leading figures of the underworld, among them John Gotti. After her heroin-addicted daughter died of Aids, she retreated with her

dog to the anonymity of the federal witness programme. The dog, she reported, never returned her affection: "It was like loving a wiseguy."

Life on the other side of the fence, as a pampered Mafia wife, may be more secure and comfortable but the shortcomings are severe. In *Mafia Marriage*, published in 1990, Rosalie Bonanno, the wife of Salvatore "Bill" Bonanno who was the consigliere (counselor) of the notorious family, says: "It means I can never ask questions such as 'Where are you going?' or 'How did you get the money?'. Mrs Bonanno, the daughter of a senior gangster, lists the drawbacks of life as a Mafia princess: the main one being the need for unquestioning obedience to your man. There is no cheque-book, no bank account no holiday. Her one attempt at divorce was met by the statement that we do not divorce".

Being married to Mr Big meant having the FBI watching your every move, questioning your children. "There were nights when my husband didn't come home and then one evening he would break into his own house, unobserved by the FBI, blindfold me and take me off to a motel or an empty house or the backseat of a car to make love. The blindfold was for my own good," says Mrs Bonanno in *Mafia Marriage*, for a woman born into the tradition, there is no other life.

Until recently, you could at least be sure of your safety as a Mafia woman, but that old rule was broken last month when hit man "whacked" Patricia Capozalo, the sister of a *capo* (Mafia captain) in the Colombo family who had broken the *omerta* ( vow of silence) and betrayed his associates, including Gotti, to the prosecutors. Mrs Capozalo survived with five bullet holes in her back.

Then two weeks ago, the FBI arrested three other mafiosi and mobsters were usually fat older

charged them with, among other things, plotting the murder of the wife of Sammy Gravano, the lieutenant who betrayed Gotti and spent nine days chronicling his life as a state witness in his trial. Mrs Gravano was under the Gambino protection, according to police, because she had done the "decent" thing and denounced her husband for his treason.

By all accounts, including the evidence of the surveillance teams and tapes, Gotti always lived up to his role of devoted husband and patriarchal model. "He did not fool around with other women," an FBI officer said. He proved his devotion in 1980 when a neighbour accidentally ran down and killed their 12-year-old son Frank as he was riding his bicycle in the street. According to police, Mrs Gotti went into a prolonged state of mourning, setting up a shrine to the boy and could not forgive the neighbour John Favara. Favara was last seen later that year being thrown into a van by large men. His body was never found.

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"But it's not really his fight. We're talking about my life. Although he is not with us, his moods are affecting us. He calls me every evening around 9.30. If his mood is good, my mood is better. If he is in a bad mood, it ruins my day. "Just thinking about the possibility that Johnny is never coming back makes me want to die."

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Albanian women have never had contraception: will new abortion laws improve their health?

## Women go last

**S**hpresa, a 35-year-old Albanian woman, has had two children, six illegal abortions and is waiting to undergo her first legal abortion in Tirana's maternity clinic.

Contraceptive methods are unknown in Albania, though the first condoms recently appeared in the booming black market and relief agencies say contraceptives are a priority. During the four decades that Albania withered under Europe's harshest communist rule, abortions were forbidden because the country's leadership wanted to ensure that there would be enough bodies to defend the country. But one of the first laws to be passed by the country's coalition government last summer was one that gave women the right to choose. The law was intended to stop the stream of dangerous, and sometimes fatal, unqualified abortions endured by Albanian women.

But the priority given to the new law was also an acknowledgement that in this country where suffering has been long and universal, women have had perhaps the roughest time of all.

Almost no statistics are available but doctors and foreign relief workers in the country say Albanians' general health is the worst in Europe, though life expectancy tops 70 years for men and women, according to the United Nations development programme. Determining the effects of the country's increasingly desperate economic situation is almost impossible because no one is conducting studies, says Figjri Kasolija, a doctor and the director of health care at the Albanian health ministry.

But two indices on women show the trend. The fertility rate in Albania is 3.0 compared with 1.9 and 1.6 in neighbouring Greece and Yugoslavia respectively. In the past five years, the number of preterm births has risen from 7 to 11 per cent, says Dr Kenneth Wind-Anderson, the director of the World Health Organisation's programme in Albania.

In fact, all one has to do is look at an Albanian woman to

realise that she is not in good health. Almost always older than they are, and their often yellowish skins show signs of vitamin deficiency and poor nutrition. Meat, fruits and vegetables have in the past decade been increasingly difficult to come by. The typical daily diet in Albania consists of flour, sugar, rice, oil and butter, items that have always been the backbone of Albanian meals but are no longer being processed or produced and are instead supplied under Italy's food aid programme.

In addition, say doctors and aid workers, women are expected to carry the greater burden of work in the home even when they are pregnant. "Enver Hoxha spoke of emancipation of women but it was only so women could contribute more to the totalitarian patriarchal production," says Natasha Lako, a writer and Democratic party parliamentarian, one of the few women in Albanian poli-

tics. As in the former Soviet Union and Eastern bloc countries, nearly all women work outside the home and are responsible for running the house. Conveniences such as washing machines and refrigerators are seen in only a few homes and are non-existent in the rural mountain areas, where 70 per cent of the population live.

**D**espite their poor health, the only time most of these women see a hospital is when giving birth. The country's network of clinics and hospitals handles 99 per cent of births. Dr Wind-Anderson says: "Relief workers praise the reach of the health care system, but say conditions in clinics and hospitals are appalling. Most foreign relief aid is channelled to these institutions.

At the Tirana maternity hospital, which houses the newly opened abortion clinic and the obstetrics and gynaecology wards, hygiene appears to be lacking almost complete-

ly. Floors are muddy and strewn with rubbish and bundles of sheets. A stray cat stinking through the hall is not an uncommon sight. There is no fuel for heating, though the temperature last winter often dipped below freezing.

"Basically we lack everything," says Liljana Borochi, a surgeon, ticking off a list of desperately needed items: blankets, sheets, infant formulae and simple reagents such as methanol and ethanol for essential tests. Though prenatal care is available throughout the country, Dr Borochi says most personnel are unqualified. Fetal monitoring is done with the stethoscope alone.

Of the 8,000 deliveries in this hospital each year, 1,200 are caesarian sections. Dr Borochi says, though recently only one operating theatre — which had run out of oxygen — was working because the ceiling had collapsed in the other one. Abortions and other surgery are performed with instruments that are sterilised only with boiled water or in an autoclave whose efficacy is doubtful, Dr Borochi says.

Tests for the HIV virus are not done in the maternity hospital because it lacks the

equipment and although no cases of AIDS have been reported in Albania, several doctors are fearful of an epidemic. Only one clinic in the country tests blood for the HIV virus and it is as some believe, many of the Albanian women who have gone to Italy are working as prostitutes, the virus could spread on their return.

Abortions, which cost women the equivalent of two days' wages, are done without vacuum pumps, though Dr Borochi says infections have been rare. A family planning division has been set up by the health ministry.

"What sort of ways are there to stop from having more babies?" asked Shpresa, who says she cannot afford to have more children.

When Dr Borochi suggests that women should try to have intercourse only during infertile times of the month, the women burst into laughter. "Doctor, you don't know our husbands," Shpresa says.

BRENDA FOWLER

## MANWATCHING

### Sporting table talk

A male table tennis player is a reassuring but occasionally mysterious creature

**A** Friday night finds me in the Woodford Leisure Centre in Hull, watching four men bat a small ball back and forth across a table. The table is a few feet away across the main sports hall. The Woodford Leisure Centre is remarkable because the man who gave it its name ten years ago, Councillor Harry Woodford, is not, as is the tradition, dead, but very much alive. Indeed, he is still as alert as the day when, a decade ago, the Leisure Services Committee of Hull City Council voted to name the city's new leisure centre after their esteemed chairman, Councillor Harry Woodford. Harry is not present, but I know he is proud, because tonight his centre is staging an international fixture. England are playing Austria at ping pong.

The crowd gasps. And Carl knows the form: he holds his bat up in apology if he flakes a winner from a net cord or the side of the table. At home, I reckon to do this too: if a shot hits an encrusted lump of, say, wallpaper paste and accelerates unplayably into a pot plant, then the etiquette is just the same. "Sorry about the wallpaper paste shot, Dave!" "No problem Bob, they even do those photo shots!"

So I watch Carl as he prepares to serve, looking for his secret. His partner, Geoff Cooke, creeps behind him. Carl bends low. He bounces the ball, McEnroe-style. One bounce, two bounces. Then he cradles the ball into his stomach in his left hand, a good foot below the table sticks two fingers in the air very quickly, then flips the ball up, and serves it.

Sticks two fingers up? No, surely not. I look again. Crouch, bend, ready, pause two fingers, throw, serve. Why is he doing that? Is he being rude to the Austrians? Not very sporting — and, frankly, a little immature, with all these people watching in a big-time match. And some of them children.

I look across at the umpire, a serious man in a blue Amateur Table Tennis Association blazer. He clutches his microphone. Has he seen? No — his amplified breathing remains perfectly steady as it booms around Harry Woodford's pre-emptive monument. Should I tell him? No, better not, don't want to cause a scene. And, anyway, maybe Carl is pushing the McEnroe comparison and gesturing to the umpire, I watch and wait, wondering why our national table tennis champion is behaving in such an ungentlemanly way.

Carl must be signalling to Geoff, telling him where his serve will go. But no, it is always two fingers, so how would that help Geoff? And, why bother anyway — anyone who has seen a table tennis table knows that the service must land in an area about the size of the average office desk. Even if you are good enough, as Carl obviously is, to put the ball where you want it to go, and to tell your partner in advance, what is the point? You can hardly serve an ace at table tennis — the dimensions of the table preclude it. There are just not enough options. The opponent knows this. So does Geoff. Why tell him? I ponder.

And then I realise that Carl is signalling — not to Geoff — but to us, his audience. Carl's little two-finger salute is saying, "You think I'm just like you, with my red face and my naff shirt, but no! I'm the best male ping-pong in the UK, ranked 12th in Europe. Watch this — and discuss among yourselves what on earth it means!"

And then I know that Carl is not so ordinary, that he knows that this little arcane gesture sets him above the keen amateurs in the crowd who have been thinking, as I have, "I could do that": that this obscure, under-the-table pantomime is simply Carl making his mark, making his point, when he has the chance, as all men must do. Councillor Harry Woodford would understand perfectly.

ROBERT CRAMPTON



Out in front for the first time in four decades: supporters at a Democratic party rally

bed, bus

DRAGONS the London shop, started in the 1980s. Now other businesses are opening up, selling furniture and hand-made items. A family company, which

is a



Nick Nuttall reports on growing national concern over the impact that quarrying for road building and construction has on the landscape

## Pitted against quarries

**E**nvironmentalists and heritage campaigners hope that a public enquiry which opened in the West Country yesterday will become a virtual referendum on minerals and aggregates extraction in an area of great natural beauty.

The enquiry has started as national concern grows about the impact on the landscape of quarrying limestone, basalt and gravel, sand and granite for road building and construction.

Residents have formed protest groups to fight planning applications, especially in the big Thames Valley, East Anglia, east Midlands and southwest mineral extraction areas.

Fuelling the concern are recent government-commissioned figures that forecast a rise in demand for aggregates of 66 per cent by the year 2011: from 300 million to 500 million tonnes a year.

The estimates have become a source of heated debate between the industry and environmental groups such as the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE). The CPRE claims that unless action is taken soon, areas of outstanding beauty and scientific importance will come under the digger, harming villagers' lives and damaging wildlife habitats and archaeological sites.

The group underscores its fears with a report commissioned from John Adams, at University College, London, estimating that if the new forecasts are met "from the beginning of the century to 2011 the amount of aggregate extracted ... amounts to an 8 billion cubic metre hole in the ground".

The campaigning has not gone unnoticed by the industry. Jerry McLaughlin, economist for BACMI, the London-based trade federation, says: "During the past 18 months there has been a more co-ordinated approach by groups such as the CPRE. They are anti-

quarrying but they also object to the construction that requires the aggregates in the first place."

The enquiry that began in the Somerset town of Frome yesterday about quarrying in the Mendip Hills, sets groups including the CPRE, the Somerset Trust for Nature Conservation and the Mendip Society against ARC, one of the country's aggregate-extraction companies. The battle centres on ARC's request for planning permission to extend Whatley quarry, near Mells, Somerset, in the east Mendip hills.

Campaigners claim that the extra 125 acres being sought by the company threaten landscape and water supplies to farms and Frome which come from sources including the Oldford borehole.

ARC, which has headquarters in Chipping Sodbury, Avon, argues that its existing limestone reserves will be exhausted in five years at present production rates of four to six million tonnes a year and that 350 local jobs would be directly at risk. The company has made pledges, including tree planting and screenings to hide the quarry extension, as well as protecting water supplies. However, Mary Viggiani, the CPRE's local campaigner, says: "We want an overall view of quarrying in the east Mendips. Since the 1960s some quarries

have grown to an enormous size. There are now three large quarries, including ARC's, within half a mile of each other. If they continue we will soon have no Mendip hills, just a nasty continuous canyon."

At the villages of Croft and Huncote in the Soar flood plain of Leicestershire, similar concerns are being aired. There, English China Clays, another of Britain's big extraction companies, wants to

expand quarrying operations to Croft Hill, a 200ft granite mound, which holds about 30 million tonnes of gravel and may have been the Mesomphalos or sacred hill of the druids. Jo Clarke, a member of the Croft Hill Action Group, says: "The hole they want to make will be deep enough to fit the Eiffel Tower. There is enough reserve in the existing site for the next 25 years."

The company has promised to build a hill near Croft Hill. Mrs Clarke, however, described a similar man-made hill near Huncote as "just a mound of earth on which only thistles grow... Croft Hill is one of the largest continuous areas of lowland heath remaining in Europe... with habitats for many rare and endangered birds, mammals, reptiles and flora".

The thrust of these growing number of campaigns is that the existing national policy is led by

Churn near the village of Brantspuddle, Dorset, another campaign being waged. English China Clays wants planning permission to extract 225,000 tonnes of gravel.

Paul Badcock, a retired naval officer and organiser of Residents Against Gravel Extraction (Rage), said their campaign has the backing of English Nature and local and overseas naturalists and heritage groups.

Captain Badcock said that if permission was granted an area of outstanding landscape value would be destroyed and that the rural roads that heavy haulage lorries would use were not only unsuitable but ran through two Sites of Special Scientific Interest. He said that nearby Turners Pudding Heath "is one of the largest continuous areas of lowland heath remaining in Europe... with habitats for many rare and endangered birds, mammals, reptiles and flora".

Norfolk has cut its estimate for house building by 20,000 dwellings, which is not reflected in the supply predictions. Councils are also required to hold aggregate banks equal to ten years supply even during times of diminishing

supply rather than demand, putting pressure on county councils to grant planning permission for more sites.

Ben Plowden, CPRE minerals campaigner, says: "Forecasts are based on the predict and produce principle; in other words, that minerals demand will increase. The only decision to be taken is therefore how to meet demand."

The group highlights the case of East Anglia, where a regional working group comprised of industry and county councils responded last week to government forecasts.

Norfolk has cut its estimate for house building by 20,000 dwellings, which is not reflected in the supply predictions. Councils are also required to hold aggregate banks equal to ten years supply even during times of diminishing

economic and construction activity. Bernie Marfleet, a minerals officer with Norfolk County Council, confirmed that these requirements increased pressures to grant planning permission in environmentally sensitive areas.

The CPRE is calling for more use of recycled aggregates, including demolition, slate, china clay and coal wastes. Such assertions are doubted by the industry, which rejects the claim that quarrying and extraction is supply-led. "Developing a quarry is very expensive. If an individual company gets planning permission, it will also sit down and work out its own minerals forecasts before going ahead," Mr McLaughlin says. He also claimed that even if prices were raised they would still remain a small part of construction costs and that designers prefer to work with materials with proven specifications. He said that studies were being carried out by the Building Research Establishment to see how recycled materials performed but that their use could probably climb only to 50 million tonnes.

At Whatley quarry such views anger people like Mrs Viggiani: "We have been fighting against the industry's too quick, too cheap approach. All that is left now in parts of the east Mendips are great wet holes. It is critically important that we stop this extension."

**Enough is enough: Mary Viggiani, a campaigner, says the east Mendips have been quarried since the 1960s and some quarries have grown to an enormous size**

### Estimates cause arguments'

by to replace Clarke, however, described a similar man-made hill near Huncote as "just a mound of earth on which only thistles grow... Croft Hill is one of the largest continuous areas of lowland heath remaining in Europe... with habitats for many rare and endangered birds, mammals, reptiles and flora".

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## Diabetes danger in a taste of Chinese

**M**any people have criticised glutamate, the flavouring additive, since investigations showed that it stimulates neural transmitters, the chemical transmitters of impulses within the central nervous system. Yet glutamate is still used, especially in Chinese cooking.

Although we can all probably endure a little stimulation of the brain, glutamate is now in more trouble. For the first time, scientists have found that glutamate affects the secretion of insulin by the pancreas, suggesting the additive may be involved in the pathology of sugar diabetes without anybody having been aware of it.

Dr Joel Bockaert's team at the Centre for Pharmacology and Endocrinology in Montpellier, France, has been working with scientists at the Louviers Laboratory of Pharmacology and Pharmacodynamics, also in Montpellier. Their experiments show that glutamate binds with receptors in the pancreas and stimulates the organ's secretion of insulin, thus upsetting the regulation of glucose levels in the blood.

**Scientists have found new cause for caution over a food additive**

The French scientists underline the relevance of their discovery by pointing out that glutamate is already known to bind with at least three different receptors in the central nervous system. They indicate that glutamate may do more than cause headaches; that it is implicated in the death of nerve cells and pathologies of neuronal degeneration.

Glutamate can interact in this way because part of the substance part of its molecule, is an amino acid — glutamic acid — and a natural unit of proteins, of which all living things are made.

The French scientists treated the pancreases of rats, *in vitro*, with glutamate. The result was an immediate increase in the secretion of insulin. Such an increase in our bodies would normally be caused by an increase of glucose in the blood.

The researchers also found that though the effect of glutamate in their experiments depended on the concentration of glucose in the blood, the increased secretion of insulin continued even when the level of glucose in the blood was low.

The researchers managed to identify the receptor involved in the pancreas. It is a type already known — AMPA — but its identification marks the first time a receptor for glutamate has been studied outside the central nervous system.

No research on the subject has been done in Britain, although Sandor Erdos, a Hungarian scientist working in Sweden, has reviewed the subject in theory. He postulated that glutamate should be interacting with the pancreas and other organs, such as the hormone-secreting adrenals and the pineal gland. Therefore glutamate may be in even more trouble, given a little research on these organs.

It has been suggested that the possible adverse effects of glutamate may greatly depend on the health of the consumer. Healthy people may be in no danger. The French scientists believe, however, that glutamate will be accepted as a factor in the pathology of sugar diabetes, a belief supported by the fact that glutamate is already implicated in some pathological conditions of the central nervous system.



Fresh doubts are raised on the use of glutamate

Since diabetes is a major public health problem and glutamate is a widely used ingredient in cooking, the research in France may be followed up by groups elsewhere.

EDWARD ASHPOLE

### SCIENCE UPDATE

#### Rhino auction

**FIVE** black rhinoceroses, a species either extinct or endangered in most of Africa, are being auctioned to the highest bidder by the National Parks Board in South Africa. The rhinos could cost a buyer \$250,000, if past prices are any guide.

In a similar auction last year, five black rhinos went to a South African industrialist with a private game farm for about that sum. The board, whose management programmes of both black and white rhinos, have been highly successful, will use the money to fund conservation projects.

Potential bidders have to offer to buy all five rhinos so they can breed and the eventual buyer has to guarantee that they will be safe from poachers.

#### MS advance

**A FATHER** whose daughter suffers from multiple sclerosis has developed a bed-mounted bike that is helping to combat the detrimental effects of paralysis.

Sufferers of the nerve-disease can find their legs contracting and ending up under their buttocks, which can

overpower attackers by giving them electric shocks.

The vest's designers at the Shijiazhuang Electrical Appliance Factory and the State Patent Office say the garment is safe for wearers and muggers alike.

According to the newspaper, "the patentees said the vest would not hurt the wearer and would disable attackers for only a short while."

#### Fish story

**JAPANESE** catfish appear able to predict when earthquakes are about to strike, scientists at the Tokyo Metropolitan Experimental Station claim.

Seven fish, which have been studied for 16 years, consistently popped up several days before 31 per cent of earthquakes that registered "quite strong" on the Japanese earthquake scale.

Five or six of the fish peaked up to 60 to 70 per cent of the quakes, which is "better than a random association," Yasuo Baba, one of the scientists said.

The research, which last year cost \$60,000, was started after references in old books and folk tales were found to claim links between catfish and earthquakes. Some scientists suspect that the fish pick up shifts in weak electrical fields in the Earth.

#### A FACTORY

**is taking on China's rising crime rate with a high-tech invention that criminals may find shocking. In Shijiazhuang, capital of Hebei Province, a factory has obtained state patents for a high-voltage "self-defence vest", a wearable cousin of the electric stun gun.**

**A Chinese newspaper report says: "If the electronic vest is turned on, the wearer can**

**California and Texas. By now, the modellers were convinced they had the key to predicting El Niño and the consequent abnormal weather.**

**The implications of being able to predict broad weather patterns months ahead are vast. In tropical and sub-tropical regions, the behaviour of the equatorial Pacific exerts a great influence over whether or not the rainy season is particularly wet or dry. In the north Atlantic, El Niño years are marked by a low level of hurricane activity because the tropical Atlantic tends to be cooler than normal. But while last winter's forecast was a success, in the past the connections between the weather over North America and the El Niño have been less convincing. And there is little evidence that events in the Pacific have a significant effect on British seasonal weather.**

**This shows that though El Niño may be the biggest event on the global weather scene, there are other important "sideshows". Weather patterns may be more dependent on less well orchestrated sea surface temperature changes in the north and south Atlantic or other long-term fluctuations in the climate.**

**BETWEEN** the 1982 and 1983 El Niños, the climate modellers were convinced their computer simulations could

**predict the onset of an El Niño months or even years in advance. Lately, the models have been put to the test.**

**In 1990 the behaviour of the Pacific began to look as if it was gearing up for an event. Though the computer models did not endorse the superficial reading of shifting wind patterns, the United States Weather Service went ahead with a forecast on the assumption of an El Niño. The service predicted the winter would be exceptionally cold in eastern North America and warm in the west.**

**In the event, El Niño did not materialise and the winter was almost the diametric opposite to that forecast — round one to the modellers.**

**By the summer of 1991, several models agreed in their forecast on an El Niño. At the same time Japan was being battered by a record number of typhoons. This time the forecasters heeded the models and produced a prediction that correctly foresaw the record warmth in the upper mid-west and western Canada, with floods in**



Typhoon in Japan: an effect that might have been predictable

**the eastern Pacific falls and rises over Australia and the Indian Ocean. The easterly trade winds that normally blow across the equatorial Pacific reverse, pushing warm water eastwards and carrying the cool water westwards along the equator.**

**The changes have worldwide effects because the tropical oceans act as the boiler driving the circulation of the global atmosphere.**

**During an El Niño, the overall global temperature rises significantly. The Indian monsoon is delayed and severe drought afflicts Indonesia, much of Australia, southern Africa and northern South America. Conversely, the southern United States, the western Pacific and the Peruvian and Ecuadorian coasts are deluged. Between successive El Niños, the pattern is often reversed. This apparently well-organised response has excited climatologists. But not until the 1980s did these changes cease to be a climatic curiosity.**

**What happens is that an area of warmer than average water develops off the coast of Peru and over the next few years or so spreads across the Pacific. Linked with these changes, atmospheric pressure over**

**interact to produce roughly regular fluctuations in the sea surface temperatures of the Pacific.**

**Not only did these studies produce believable models of El Niño, they suggested how these changes might extend far into the tropics and even influence North American winters.**

**By the end of the 1980s, the climatic modellers were convinced their computer simulations could**

**BILL BURROUGHS**

# Ringing bells in Westminster

Chris Patten has one. So does Teresa Gorman (halfway up the stairs) and Jonathan Aitken (in the hall). Come tomorrow's election result, there will be about 60 new MPs hoping to become one of the 200-odd MPs who live near enough to the Commons to have an electric 'division bell' in their homes, which signals the need for them to dash to the Commons to vote. About 60 other MPs will need to sell up. It's all change in the Westminster property market.

estate agents are already reporting interest from prospective MPs about houses (for the Tory hopefuls) and flats (for the Labour ones). "There has been considerable interest shown in the area by a number

of prospective MPs," says Robert Strut from Strut & Parker's Westminster office. Mr Bailey is too discreet to name those bumptious candidates so certain of victory that they are already investigating the Westminster property market.

Equally, in anticipation of the new arrivals, lethargic sellers have now begun to put their houses on the market.

"Suddenly there has been a lot of activity in the area, with more quality houses available than for some time past," says Mr Bailey. "In the Lord North Street and Smith Square areas, for example, there are five houses for sale, whereas normally there would be just one."

But at least some of this expectant glee is misplaced. Property-wise prospective candidates, and their retiring counterparts, know that the best place to advertise a Westminster house or flat is the inside back cover of *The House*, the Commons' in-house magazine. The ads target the right segment of the market and save on estate agency fees.

Equally, the need to live within the 'division bell square mile', as the area between Vauxhall Bridge Road, the river, Birdcage Walk and

## Properties close enough to the House of Commons to be served by division bells are now in demand, reports Rachel Kelly

Billerica and resident of Lord North Street

"I'm always in a tizzy as to whether to go upstairs where they put that ridiculous bell halfway up the wall and knock it off with my umbrella to spare everyone the noise, or to grab my coat and charge across the road," she says.

Like many other MPs, Mrs Gorman is wondering whether to swap her bell for a beeper, thus widening the scope of where she could live. "I thought in theory you can fix a division bell anywhere, there is not much point in having one outside the immediate vicinity of Westminster. And it's expensive, costing about £400 to install, and £300 to service, plus £4 for the bell set. At least 15 MPs, shadow Chancellor John Smith among them, already live in the Barbican where the long arm of the division bell does not reach, relying on beepers or phone calls instead.

Newcomers to Westminster, however, may wish to savour every Westminster tradition, including the division bell. Knight Frank & Rutley are selling a house in Tufton Street, round the corner from Conservative Central Office, for £395,000. Next door in Smith Square, the victorious and better-heeled might consider number 4, Lord North Street, a Georgian double-fronted corner house which was originally two separate ones which were joined together before the first world war. It might just do for a budding cabinet minister.

A bell does have snob appeal, however, enforcing a sense of history and importance to the most mediocre mansion-block flat. But it doesn't add to the value of property in the area," says Edna Hunter from Hunter Estates which specialises in the area. "After all, plenty of other people who are not MPs want to live there and they are not interested in a bell."

Far from it. The screech of the bell is hardly designed to seduce non-political arrivals to the area. The bell sounds like a fire-alarm, says Teresa Gorman, MP for

the market

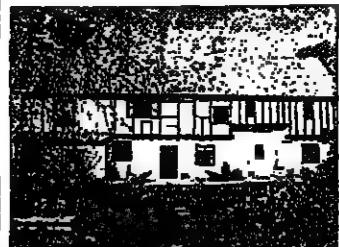


In a tizz: Teresa Gorman at home in Lord North Street

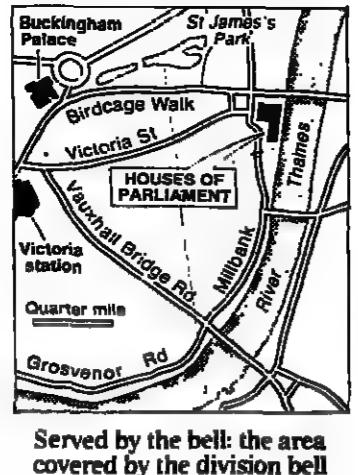
## MARKET MOVES Cottage fit for a poet

IT IS rare to find a village with its village shop still intact, but rarer still to find a listed village house nearby for sale for £158,000 and dating from the 14th century (Rachel Kelly writes). Add the fact that Chaucer House in the village of Bawdeswell in Norfolk once belonged to Geoffrey Chaucer's uncle, who was the local rector, and that the poet was said to have stayed in the house (a line from the Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales* mentions the village) and this is indeed a "best buy".

The market village of Reepham is about three miles to the east and the north Norfolk coast is 20 miles to the north. London is an hour and 40-minute train journey from Norwich, about a 25-minute drive. There is a reception hall, drawing room and dining room, kitchen, utility room, shower room, four bedrooms and two bathrooms.



Poet's corner: Chaucer House



Served by the bell: the area covered by the division bell

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## MARKET MOVES

## Wheeler dealer

Peugeot Talbot Motors is selling a 4.5-acre site half a mile from Coventry city centre. The site is almost covered by 167,000 sq ft of warehouses and a 9,000 sq ft, two-storey office block. Gerald Eve, the agent, hopes to raise £1 million.

• Bryant Properties has sold its industrial and retail warehouse investment, Maybrook Industrial Park, Leeds, to the Rolls Royce pension fund for £4.35 million.

• WH Smith has signed up for 13,000 sq ft at County Mall, a new shopping centre in Crawley, Sussex. Owen Owen, BH&B and Boots have already signed.

• A freehold holiday complex, Tros Yr Afon at Penmon, Anglesey, has been sold by Trevor & Sons for the joint receivers of Wycombe Car Hire. The property includes a 16th-century manor house with stables converted into holiday units.

• Markheath has completely let Hatfield Office Village, a new development next to the Hertfordshire town's station. Rents were £18 per sq ft with a rent-free period.

• The Royal Navy has asked Humberside to sell HMS St Vincent, otherwise known as Furse House, at Queen's Gate Terrace, South Kensington. The mid-19th century terrace property, listed grade II, was once a hotel and is currently a hostel for naval personnel.

Rodney Hobson on a double coup for Trafalgar House's Brooklands business park

# A Walkman in the park

Trafalgar House has celebrated taking 100 per cent ownership of the 350-acre Brooklands business park in Surrey by announcing two major transactions.

Sony, the Japanese electronics company, is to site its new 180,000 sq ft headquarters on the old racetrack while Marks & Spencer, the retail chain, is to seek planning permission for a 55,000 sq ft store, including 10,000 sq ft of food retailing.

The Sony deal is claimed to be the biggest letting in the UK to a Japanese company and possibly the largest pre-let achieved on a business park. The 13-acre site will allow for expansion of up to 50,000 sq ft of extra office space. There will be 874 parking spaces.

The three-storey building designed by architects Cottrell Matthews Wheatley will be built by Trafalgar House Construction to Sony's demanding specifications. It will have two wings and a central atrium.

Work on the site will begin this summer. Sony will move in next year and will pay £29 per sq ft rent on the 25-year lease with a short rent rebate. The first rent will be in five years. Sony has an option to buy the building.

The new building will house management, sales, marketing and



Flower power: Sony's headquarters will have a natural setting

administration. About 550 staff will relocate from four sites, including the current headquarters at Staines, which is already too small and offers no scope for expansion. Some staff will also move from premises occupied by a sister company in Basingstoke.

The decision ends a two-year search by Sony and Bernard Thorpe & Partners, its agent. To avoid moving staff large distances, the search concentrated on an area within the M25 between the A3 and the M4.

Malcolm Willings, deputy managing director of Sony (UK), says: "We looked hard and long at all the options open to us to the west and south-west of London and Brooklands offered us the best facilities in terms of quality and location.

"We need to be reasonably close to Heathrow airport because senior staff do a lot of international travel. We also needed access to the motorway network."

"I looked at 60 sites within the search area. Sony is a very fussy customer."

The lease on the 48,000 sq ft

Staines headquarters will be sold. Marks & Spencer has bought a six-acre site next door to the proposed 85,000 sq ft Tesco supermarket. Both stores are due to open in mid-1993.

The Brooklands industrial park was owned 50-50 by Trafalgar House and British Aerospace. Trafalgar bought out its partner for an undisclosed sum last week. The site still boasts a banked section of the pre-war racetrack and the control tower used during the war when the area was an airfield.

The Heights, where Sony will be based, has outline planning permission for 750,000 sq ft of office space on 50 acres alongside the river Wey. The retail stores will complete the redevelopment of the western sector, where 1 million sq ft of purpose-built distribution and industrial space is occupied.

To the south, a 25-acre residential development is under construction and the final phase, the 145-acre central area, is the subject of a planning application for 700,000 sq ft of business space, a hotel and 70 acres of parkland.

Well-known names taking space are British Aerospace, Misui, Courage, Cadbury-Schweppes and John Lewis. All buildings have been pre-let. The joint agents are Deberham Tewson & Chinooks and Robert Neil.



A Swedish consortium, Golden Lane Properties, has completed the refurbishment of Fortune Court, a 105,000 sq ft office development in the City of London. Joint letting agents are Healey & Baker and Henry Davis City.

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## No right to retain material

Regina v Chief Constable of Lancashire, Ex parte Parker  
Regina v Same, Ex parte McGrath  
Before Lord Justice Nolan and Mr Justice Jowitt  
[Judgment March 31]

The police did not have a general right to retain unlawfully seized material as against its owner for use as evidence under section 22(2) of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 as the subsection had to be read in conjunction with the rest of section 22 and was thus only concerned with material seized under the provisions of sections 19 and 20.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court had held on applications for judicial review by Harold Parker and Frank McGrath when declaring that there had been breaches of section 16(5)(b) and (c) by the Lancashire police in the execution of search warrants at the homes of the applicants and in ordering that documents seized be returned.

Section 22 of the 1984 Act provides: "(1) Subject to subsection (4) below, anything which has been seized by a constable or taken away by a constable following a search warrant by virtue of section 19 or 20 may be retained so long as is necessary in all the circumstances.

"(2) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1) above—  
(a) anything seized for the purposes of a criminal investigation may be retained except as provided by subsection (4) below;  
(b) for use as evidence at trial for an offence or (ii) for forensic examination or for investigation in connection with an offence...

"(4) Nothing may be retained... if a photograph or copy would be sufficient for that purpose."

Mr Eldred Tabachnick, QC and Mr Daniel Janner for the applicants; Mr John Shorrock, QC and Mr Geoffrey Tatlers for the chief constable.

LORD JUSTICE NOLAN, giving the judgment of the court, said that the warrants had consisted of an authorisation and a schedule listing the items being sought.

Unfortunately at the time of execution a photocopy of the schedule was attached to the original authorisation and the applicants were supplied with a copy of the authorisation which did not have a copy of the schedule attached to it.

It was highly desirable that the copying and certification of copies under section 15(7) and (8) be carried out by the issuing court. The Act required that section 15 provided for the issue of a warrant. It was issued by a judge or magistrate.

Compliance with section 15(7)

and (8) was to be seen as part of the issuing process and was therefore the responsibility of the judge or magistrate who issued the warrant, although the section did not prevent him from delegating that part of the issuing process to the staff of his court.

The chief constable accepted that there had been a breach of section 16(5)(c) by virtue of the failure to provide the applicants with a copy of the schedule but argued that the replacement of the original schedule by a photocopy had been authorised by the judge.

That would not do. Leaving aside the fact that such an interpretation of the facts found no support in the affidavit of the judge, even if it was the fact that the judge authorised the replacement of the original schedule, attached to the original authorisation which he signed, by a photocopied schedule he had no right to do so.

It was clear beyond argument that when the Act referred to a warrant issued by a judge it meant the whole of the original document seen and approved and put forth by him.

The copies of the warrant for which section 15(7) and (8) provided had to be clearly certified as such. It would be wholly contrary to the purpose of the legislation if a judge could authorise the police to replace the whole or a part of the original warrant, for the

purpose of its execution, by an unauthenticated photocopy which he had not seen.

There had therefore been a breach of section 16(5)(b).

The chief constable had argued that even though the entry and search were unlawful he was entitled to retain documents and other material which had been seized.

The searches were purportedly made under the authority of warrants issued pursuant to paragraph 12 of Schedule 1. The power to seize and retain material for which a search had been authorised under paragraph 13, the only authority involved by the police was under that paragraph.

The consequences of the breaches of section 16(5)(b) and (c) was that by virtue of section 15(1) the entries, searches and seizures were unlawful, so depriving the police of any authority under paragraph 13 to retain any of the material seized.

Mr Shorrock relied, however, upon the power of retention conferred by section 22(2)(a) which he submitted, was designed to authorise the retention by the police of material which had come into their hands by unlawful means.

He submitted that if the provisions of subsection 22(2)(a) applied only to material which was lawfully in the possession of the police then it would be superfluous.

## Assessing father's services

Hayden v Hayden  
Before Lord Justice Parker, Lord Justice McCowan and Sir David Croom-Johnson  
[Judgment March 24]

Where an infant defendant's mother was killed in an accident in a car driven by the father which resulted in the father replacing the mother's lost services by caring for the infant himself, the father's services were not a benefit which had accrued as a result of the death.

Accordingly, section 4 of the Fatal Accidents Act 1976 did not apply so that the value of the father's services should be taken into account in assessing the damages payable to the plaintiff.

The Court of Appeal said, Lord Justice McCowan dissenting, that the defendant had no right to replace such services himself but could have kept his employment to look after his infant.

For the defendant, it was submitted that the value of his services should be taken into account, that is, set against the value of the mother's lost services in arriving at the plaintiff's loss.

Lord Justice McCowan delivered a judgment, *inter alia*, dissenting on the cross-appeal.

The action resulted from an accident in which a car driven by the defendant overturned killing his wife who was a passenger.

Liability was not disputed.

Section 4 of the 1976 Act provides: "In assessing damages in respect of a person's death in an action under this Act, benefit which accrued as a result of his death to any person from his estate or otherwise as a result of his death shall be disregarded."

Mr William Crowther, QC and Mr Christopher J. Russell for the claimants; Mr Michael Brent, QC and Mr Duncan MacLeod, QC for the plaintiff.

LORD JUSTICE PARKER, agreeing with Sir David Croom-Johnson on the cross-appeal, said that the plaintiff, who was aged four at the time of the accident, had no other services and that in order to replace such services himself he would have to give up his employment.

For the defendant, it was submitted that the value of his services should be taken into account, that is, set against the value of the mother's lost services in arriving at the plaintiff's loss.

Lord Justice McCowan delivered a judgment, *inter alia*, dissenting on the cross-appeal.

Solicitors: Berryman, J. D. Spicer & Co, Lower Edmonton.

in effect be paying damages three times over.

First, he would be providing replacement services free of charge. Second, he would be paid for the services he had so provided and, third, he would have lost his entitlement in order to provide such services.

That was not, and on the face of it, appears not to be in accordance with justice. Furthermore, in cases in which it was shown that the services of the father were as good, or better than the services previously provided by the mother, there is, on the face of it, difficult to see that the child had suffered a recoverable loss.

With conflicting decisions on the point whether the gratuitous services of a relative did or did not result from the death of the mother his Lordship had no difficulty in following *Hay v Hughes* [1975] QB 900 rather than *Stanley v Seddique* [1992] 1 QB 1 and if that was right section 4 did not apply.

Lord Justice McCowan delivered a judgment, *inter alia*, dissenting on the cross-appeal.

For the plaintiff, it was submitted that the father's services must be wholly disregarded by reason of section 4. For the defendant, it was pointed out that if his services were to be disregarded he would

## Compensation term not implied

Chelsea Football and Athletic Co Ltd v SB Property Company Ltd

Before Lord Justice Dillon, Lord Justice Leggatt and Lord Justice Nolan  
[Judgment April 2]

The courts would not generally imply a term into contracts for the sale and purchase of land which would ensure compensation for all delay, whatever disputes or issues might arise.

If parties envisaged at the time of making their contracts that delay at any stage might be prejudicial they should agree a timetable or make provision for the contracts to be rescinded on the occasion of appropriate events.

The Court of Appeal had held in a reserved judgment in (i) dismissing an appeal by Chelsea Football and Athletic Co Ltd ("the club") against the decision of Mr Justice Millen on February 26, 1992 ordering immediate specific performance of a contract for the purchase of land without deducting from the purchase price of any damages payable by SB Property Company ("the company") for breach of an implied term by the club and (ii) allowing a cross-appeal by the company against the decision of Mr Justice Millen that the club had breached an implied term pleaded by the club.

Because of that action, solicitors for the club and the company agreed that the valuation procedure should be deferred until the validity of the club's notice purporting to exercise the option had been determined by the court.

A valuation surveyor was not appointed until May 3, 1991 and he made a report on November 27, 1991 determining the open market value on August 23, 1988 at £22,000.

By early 1991, the property market had collapsed. The company therefore decided on commercial grounds that it was expedient for it to abandon its arrangements with Crest and to hold the club to its exercise of the option in order to be let, at some, make time of the club.

His Lordship could see no basis at all for implying such a term. The lease contained no indication of urgency and the club's exercise of the option constituted a repudiatory breach of contract, for it involved a failure to perform the contractual obligation.

Crest surrendered its lease and in February 1991 the company conceded, contrary to its previous conventions, that the option had been validly exercised by the club. A declaration to that effect was made by the Vice-Chancellor by consent of the parties.

In the same order, the Vice-Chancellor had held that the relevant valuation date for the purposes of the option was August 23, 1988 and that the appointment of the surveyor was valid and effective.

The need for urgency over the determination of the price by the valuer which was now emphasised so much by the club

had occurred only as a result of the collapse of the property market which neither party expected when the option was exercised.

The suggested new principle was particularly inappropriate where a genuine dispute between the parties had to be resolved by the court before completion could take place.

In the present case, there was a genuine dispute between the company and the club over whether the granting of the Crest lease was exercised by the club's option and so precluded any valid exercise of the option.

The extension of the law involved in the implication of the term contended for by the club was unwarranted. If the parties envisaged, when they made their contract, that delay at any stage in performance might be prejudicial they should agree a timetable, or make provision for the contract to be rescinded in appropriate events.

They could not assume that the law would make a blanket implication into their contract of a general term which would ensure compensation for all delay, even if disputes or issues might arise.

Mr Justice Millen heard all the matters and held that the contract which arose from the club's exercise of the option should be specifically performed immediately without any deduction from the purchase price of the damages payable by the club.

A valuation surveyor was not appointed until May 3, 1991 and he made a report on November 27, 1991 determining the open market value on August 23, 1988 at £22,000.

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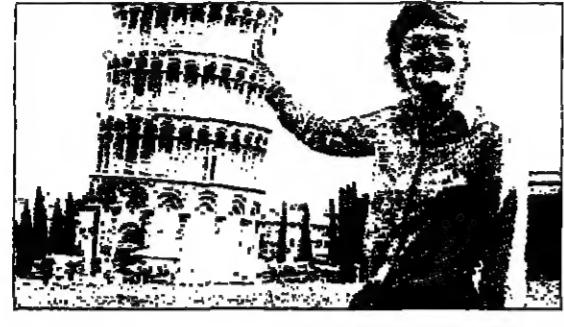
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## BBC1

6.00 *Ceefax* (29088) 6.30 *BBC Breakfast News* (21635663)  
 9.05 *Election Call* presented by Jonathan Dimbleby. On the eve of the general election John Major, the prime minister, answers viewer's and listeners' questions. To participate ring 071-793 5000.  
 10.00 *News*, regional news and weather (4662021) 10.05 *Playdays* (r) (5723663) 10.25 *The Family News* (r) (4672408) 10.35 *Gilberish*.  
 11.30 *People Today*. Magazine series presented by Miriam Stoppard and Adrian Mills. Includes news, regional news and weather (5630691) 12.20 *Million Pound Chat* introduced by Alan Titchmarsh (5638311) 12.55 *Regional News and Weather* (13572685)  
 1.00 *One O'Clock News and Weather* (51514)  
 1.30 *Neighbours* (Ceefax) (s) (64156069) 1.50 *Turnabout*. Rob Curting with another round of the word power quiz (64150885)  
 2.15 *Racing from Ascot* introduced by Julian Wilson. Live coverage of the 2.30, 3.00 and 3.40 races (s) (626040)  
 3.50 *Henry's Cat*. Animation (s) (4158214) 4.10 *Attack Of The Killer Tomatoes*. Animated fantasy series (s) (2850205) 4.30 *The Movie Game*. A new film and video quiz (Ceefax) (s) (594)  
 5.00 *Newsround* (749632) 5.10 *Little Sir Nitpick*. Episode two of the two-part son-child's drama serial (r) (Ceefax) (7076446)  
 5.35 *Neighbours* (r) (Ceefax) (s) (556392). Northern Ireland: Inside Ulster  
 6.00 *Six O'Clock News* with Peter Sissons and Moira Stuart (Ceefax) Weather (427)  
 6.30 *Regional News Magazines* (779). Northern Ireland: *Neighbours*  
 7.00 *Woman*. With Dustin Hoffman and, with a song, the *Temptations* (s) (6137)  
 7.30 *Tomorrow's World*. Includes a report from India on how scientists, with the help of students from Oxford University, are tackling the problem of overcrowding among elephants and humans (Ceefax) (s) (663)  
 8.00 *Only Fools and Horses*. Del is looking forward to his old school's reunion and meeting his former classmates, but one of them isn't as friendly as Del had hoped (r) (Ceefax) (460069)  
 8.50 *Points of View* with Anna Robinson (s) (339553)  
 9.00 *Nine O'Clock News and Campaign Report* with Michael Buerk (Ceefax) Weather (757971)



Titling: Hazel Burnett supports Pisa's tower (9.50pm)

9.50 *Q.E.D. Propping Up Pisa*.  
 ● CHOICE: The leaning tower of Pisa has been increasing its tilt for 800 years but now things are getting serious. In the past 50 years the rate of tilt has nearly doubled and sober experts are predicting collapse sooner rather than later if nothing is done. Cynthia Page's entertaining film offers a potted history of the tower, looks at theories of why it moves and recalls that no fewer than 15 commissions have been set up this century with the brief to save it. All have either failed to agree or seen their remedies lost in the labyrinth of Italian bureaucracy. In February the latest deliberations seemed to produce an answer. No one is confident that it will be acted upon. Meanwhile the tower has been closed to the public and Pisa's tourist trade has fallen by a quarter. (Ceefax) (360359)  
 10.20 *Sportsworld* presented by Desmond Lynam. Boxing: Britain's Henry Wharton defends his Commonwealth super-middleweight title against Rod Carr of Australia at Leeds Town Hall; Athletics: a profile of Carl Lewis, the legendary American sprinter and long jump ace; Golf: a preview of the US Masters which begins tomorrow in Augusta (392088).  
 11.40 *Spenser For Hire*. Private detective drama series. This week Spenser investigates the death of a man who, a writer claims, did not exist and was only a fictional character in one of her books. Starring Robert Urich (314243)  
 12.00am *On The Hustings*. Highlights of the eve-of-the-election canvassing (4949915) 12.50 *Weather* (4928977)

## SKY NEWS

● Via the Astra and Marco Polo satellites.  
 6.00am *News* (755514) 9.30 *The Conference* (140259) 9.50 *News* (40883)  
 Mrs Pepperpot (3620534) 8.55 *Lamb Chop* Phone-in (45789) 11.30 *Nightline* (40883)  
 12.00 *News* (11595) 1.30pm *Good Morning America* (24652) 2.30 *Good Morning America* (16106) 3.00 *News* (11595) 3.30 *News* (11595) 4.00 *News* (11595) 4.30 *News* (11595) 5.00 *Live at Five* (56985) 6.30 *Newsline* (18583) 8.30 *Target Barnaby Jones* (25040) 12.00 *News* (11595) 11.30 *ABC News* (68157) 12.30 *Newsline* (24689) 1.30 *Another World* (601960) 2.30 *News* (68157) 3.00 *News* (11595) 3.30 *Newsline* (24689) 4.00 *News* (11595) 4.30 *Newsline* (24689) 5.00 *News* (11595) 5.30 *ABC News* (68157) 6.00 *Memories: 1970-1991* (13034) 5.30 *News* (34151)  
 SKY MOVIES+  
 ● Via the Astra and Marco Polo satellites.  
 6.00am *News* (59179) 7.00 *News* (11595) 8.00 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 8.15 *News* (11595) 8.30 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 8.45 *News* (11595) 8.50 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 9.00 *Chances* (71243)  
 10.00 *News* (32999) 10.30 *News* (11595) 11.00 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 11.30 *News* (11595) 12.00 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 12.30 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 1.00 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 1.30 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 1.45 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 2.00 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 2.15 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 2.30 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 2.45 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 3.00 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 3.15 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 3.30 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 3.45 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 3.50 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 3.55 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 4.00 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 4.15 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 4.30 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 4.45 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 5.00 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 5.15 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 5.30 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 5.45 *Young and the Restless* (23999) 5.50 *Young and the 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